

H I S T O R Y

OF

LADY BETTESWORTH

AND

CAPTAIN HASTINGS.

In a SERIES of LETTERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:

Printed for F. NOBLE, in HOLBORN.

M D C C L X X X.

HISTORY

OF

LADY BETTENDORF

AND

CAPTAIN HASTINGS

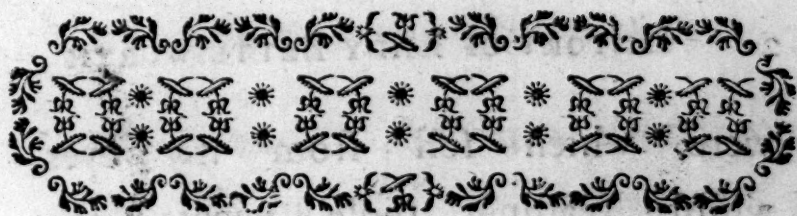
IN A SERIES OF LETTERS



IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

LONDON:
Printed for T. NOBLE, in Pall Mall.
MDCCLXXX.



HISTORY

OF

LADY BETTESWORTH

AND

CAPTAIN HASTINGS.

LETTER XII.

Miss AMBRIDGE to Lady BETTESWORTH.

Seamore Park.

Y gratitude to my dearest
M Cassandra, for the trouble
she has had in obliging
me, is as unbounded, as the tears

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B

were

were which fell from my eyes, whilst reading those events that have given my amiable friend so much pain. However, I will drop the subject till we meet, lest my present feelings should lead me to offend, by exclaiming as Romeo did, that "Fathers have flinty hearts," and proceed to acquaint you, that next Sunday, I propose to embrace my friend; as my good uncle (for he shall always merit that appellation, after this indulgence) is still in the same mind, and promises to make me happy. I am all joy, all rapture, and all impatience: and though it is now ten o'clock, and

and I expect the man every moment to call for my letter, yet I could not refrain communicating these happy tidings, as I flatter myself our joy at meeting will be reciprocal. To doubt it, would be to doubt my own heart, for is not Cassandra's a part of it? Yes, they are grafted together by the same sentiments, and to hold joy from her one instant would be punishing myself.

I meant to have wrote this morning, but have been employed all the day in providing some little

matters for my brother, who leaves us to-morrow. Here is the man who is to take my letter, he has two miles to carry it to the post office. — Adieu. I love you, my Edward adores you, my guardian respects you, and so concludes

JULIA AMBRIDGE.

P. S. I always esteemed miss Grenville, though I may sometimes omit telling her so; which omission through my hurry I had like to have been guilty of at this time.

L E T.

LETTER XIII.

*Edw. AMBRIDGE, Esq; to Miss AMBRIDGE,
at Bettesworth Mount.*

Seamore Park.

MY DEAR SISTER,

THE distressing event that so soon calls you from your amiable friend, gives me pain to communicate: it is as follows. My poor aunt, during our journey to Dover, which I made as easy to

her, as possible, seemed rather in spirits than otherwise: but no sooner had we arrived, and alighted at the tavern, than she, without the least previous notice of approaching death, sunk lifeless from her chair. I left Dover on Thursday, and wrote this by my uncle's command. He is much indisposed, which I suppose proceeds from the shock this event gave him. He seems much affected with it, and requests you will immediately on the arrival of the carriage, and your woman who goes in it to attend you home, set off for Seamore Park. The remains of my poor aunt are to be removed here

here this day week, in order to be interred in the family vault. So many things call for my attention at this unfortunate crisis, or I should have deprived your woman of the jaunt, and have had the supreme pleasure, in person, of assuring lady Bettefworth of my best respects, miss Grenville, of my esteem, and my dear Julia, that I am her ever

Affectionate Brother,

EDWARD AMBRIDGE.

L E T T E R XIV.

Miss AMBRIDGE, to *Lady* BETTESWORTH.

Seamore Park.

HAD I not told you, my dearest
 Cassandra, not to expect a
 letter for the space of a week, I
 should be apprehensive you would
 by this time accuse me of neglect.
 I had but an indifferent journey,
 the weather exceedingly wet and cold,
 and to add to the gloom, my me-
 ditations

ditionations were none of the most pleasing kind. I was regretting the joys I had just bid adieu to at the Mount, and the solemn review I was going to be witness of, at Seamore Park. I found my uncle much indisposed with a feverish disorder, he was very low spirited, kissed me several times without being able to articulate a word. It hurts me much to see a man so affected, their hearts are not of so tender a nature as to be easily moved; and why he should be so much distressed about my poor aunt I cannot conceive, she not being his own relation, and he never appeared over fond of her.

I am apt to believe those tears were occasioned from the solemn scenes reminding him, how soon it would, in all likelihood, be his own turn. Well, whatever was the cause, I sincerely feel for him; for the idea of death brings horror with it, even if accompanied with a probability of many years reprieve, and his infirmities and age, will not allow that flatterer a place in his hopes. However, if care and tenderness will prolong his stay in a world, which he seems so attached to, his dutiful niece will spare no pains to accomplish it; for his late indulgence has really
made

made him dear to me. Have I not a grateful heart, Cassandra, that trifles can make so great an impression on it? or is it not rather a weak one?

My aunt Hamilton has left a fortune of thirty seven thousand pounds: twenty of which is my brother's, ten mine, at my own disposal, and the other seven distributed in legacies. We took leave of her remains last evening. The room where she laid, and avenue she was to pass through, were dressed in the trappings of solemn black, ornamented with pale glimmering torches. At eleven, attended

tended by many of those gloomy meteors, she was escorted to that awful mansion the grave, surrounded by a multitude of villagers, who had collected themselves from every quarter within several miles. My spirits are so depressed, that it is not in my power to commission my pen with one pleasing idea; I will therefore lay it aside, as soon as I have presented my respects to Miss Grenville, and assured my friend, my dearest Cassandra, that I am her sincere

Affectionate,

JULIA AMBRIDGE.

LETTER XV.

Miss GRENVILLE, to Miss AMBRIDGE.

Bettesworth Mount.

MY DEAR MISS AMBRIDGE,

THE carriage is now at the door, and we are going (I mean lady Bettesworth, and your humble

humble servant) to set off immediately for London. Her ladyship has commissioned me, whilst she finishes dressing, to thank you for your favour which she this moment received, and to express the pleasure it gave her, to find you arrived at Seamore Park, uninjured in your health, by the disagreeable weather you had to travel through: she flatters herself that it is so, as you make no mention to the contrary. She sympathises with you for the indisposition of your uncle, and sincerely wishes him a speedy recovery, yourself long life, uninterrupted health,
and

and a continuance of those that are dear to you. Permit me, my dear Julia, to join with her ladyship in these wishes, and every event that tends to your felicity, and to conclude with this very great truth, that I am, with much esteem,

Your

Ever affectionate,

CHARLOTTE GRENVILLE.

P. S. Lady Bettsworth proposes staying but a short time in town; on her return to the Mount, you may expect to hear from her.

L E T.

LETTER XVI.

Lady BETTESWORTH, to Miss AMBRIDGE.

Bettesworth Mount.

Wednesday Morning,

I Am, my dear Julia, returned to the Mount, but in such a state no language can describe: my mind

mind is kept in eternal commotion; joy and hope one moment plays about my heart: the next, sorrow and despair claims its privilege, as being the oldest inhabitant of that mansion: which will be victorious, Heaven only knows. But to keep you no longer in impatience, for I think I hear you now begin to chide me for this delay, I will end my prelude by informing you, the day before I received your favour, a letter was brought me from Lady Hill, acquainting me of her arrival in London, and requesting my company for a few weeks. It

was

was with reluctance I once more ventured to a place of so much hurry and dissipation, but thought so small a compliment, at least, was due for the many very great civilities I had received from her.

The next morning, miss Grenville and myself set out together. When we arrived, lord and lady Hill, accompanied by two ladies, were just stepping into their coach. They were going to see a new tragedy, the name of which I have forgot. Knowing lady Hill was fond of theatrical entertainments, I
was

was determined not to occasion a disappointment; I therefore requested leave to accompany them. This new piece had the most powerful effect on my spirits, every scene in it being adapted to awaken my former sorrow; one in particular, where a lady pathetically describes the cruelty of her father having obliged her to give her hand to a man she detested, at the very time, when her heart and vows were engaged to another. This resembled so much what I had experienced, that it robbed me of all fortitude: every struggle I had felt on the like occasion, became recent

recent in my mind. I was carried to lady Hill's almost lifeless, and continued delirious through the night. When I recovered, though conscious of the very ridiculous part I had shewn, my tears were not to be restrained, every time the piece was mentioned. One of my footmen who had attended me from the theatre, acquainted miss Grenville that a gentleman had followed me out, and had asked him many questions; particularly, how long I had been in England, if my name was lady Bettsworth, and if Sir Martin was in London? The servant informed him, Sir Martin was dead.

dead. At this intelligence, he enquired the place of my abode, and then departed. I was anxious to know, yet was perfectly ignorant, even in conjecture who it could be. James likewise informed miss Grenville, that a servant whom he saw with that gentleman, had been early in the morning to gain intelligence of my health, and in half an hour after, he returned, and left the following letter.

L E T.

LETTER XVII.

To Lady BETTESWORTH.

Cavendish Square.

DEAR MADAM,

IT is impossible to express the different emotions which seized my heart, on entering the theatre, and there beholding the only object of my wishes, the charming, the adorable lady Bettsworth. Not knowing of your being in England,
I some-

I sometimes doubted my senses, but soon my heart assured me, no other form could be half so lovely. I was gazing with rapture, when the sudden paleness which overspread your face, robbed me of every joy. I followed you to your carriage, and had the inexpressible happiness of hearing the air had a little restored you. My dear lady Bettesworth, did you know half I suffered, agitated by a wish of making myself known to you, and the fear that, by so doing, I should only encrease my past torments, you could not refuse me your pity. How ill do

do those poets judge, who assert, that absence is a cure and balm for love! Sure I am, it has had no influence on the heart of your Hastings. His affections for lady Bettsworth will for ever remain unalterable. How happy would it make me, could I flatter myself, you still felt some tender sentiments in my favour! by permitting me the honour of waiting on you this afternoon, you will give new life to your

Most faithful,
and affectionate,

T. HASTINGS.

My

My first emotions on reading this letter, were those of surprize and joy: in short, Julia, my every pulse beat love; but, in a moment, my too precipitate disposition, and that mistaken notion of honour, which, without having the power to correct it, I am conscious but too much governs the conduct of your friend, caught the alarm, and I mistook its influence for the monitor of wise reflection. It roused my resentment, and, in an instant, buried the influence he had before in my heart, in the idea of the affront I thought he had offered me. I asked myself, how it was possible

captain Hastings could treat me with so much indelicacy, by mentioning a passion, which, as he was another's, ought to have been for ever forgotten. Had he wrote in any other stile, it would have given me pleasure, and I might with propriety have received his visits, without farther hesitation. I hastily took up my pen, mortified with the improper liberty I thought he had taken with me, and wrote the following billet:

S I R,

I Received your epistle this morning, which not a little surprized me,
and

and should have been greatly puzzled to have guessed from whom it came, had not the name of Hastings convinced me it was written by the only person in the world from whom I least expected it. Had you, Sir, attributed your emotions, and desire of seeing me to any other cause than love, I own it would have given me infinite joy to have been remembered by one who, I will not deny, was once dear to me; nor do I blush to own a partiality which, at that time, had the approbation of my dearest father; but circumstances being changed, and the existence of so insurmountable a bar as is now between us, ought

to have restrained your professions, and I cannot help saying, I think a congratulatory note on my arrival in England, would have been more proper, and I am sure more correspondent with the idea I had formed of captain Hastings's sense of honour, and the respect which I once flattered myself he had felt for me: but since, Sir, I have been mistaken, and you seem to have forgotten what is due to me, I must deny myself the pleasure of seeing you this evening, and am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. BETTESWORTH.

O these

O these men ! thought I. Is it possible, he, who was once so dear to me, could forget what is due to my sex, and the partiality I have so long harboured in my breast ? I was running on, Julia, in this manner, upbraiding him, when a transition as sudden as the former overtook me. The idea occurred, that his rashness might have proceeded from tenderness, and, that it was not impossible, but he might be an equal sufferer with your poor Cassandra. That thought almost melted my resolves, and painted him distracted at my severity. A flood of tears succeeded those reflections, and a conflict instantly took place in my breast between love and reason. I

found myself too weak to contend with two such powerful antagonists, and therefore dispatched my letter as soon as possible, determining to return immediately to the peaceful shades of Bettsworth Mount, and there endeavour to calm the mingled passions which were rioting in my beating bosom. Accordingly, the next morning, I took leave of lady Hill, after requesting my place of abode might be kept a profound secret from captain Hastings, should he take the trouble of enquiring after me.

As soon as I had done that piece of violence to my inclination of parting
with

with lady Hill, I seated myself in my chaise, and felt the conquest I had gained with the greatest self-approbation. I applauded the part I had acted, convinced that the resentment I had shewn, was due to my sex and honour.

Three days after my departure, lady Hill informed me by the post, that captain Hastings had solicited her to acquaint him in what part of England I resided : that she had, according to my desire, refused to satisfy him, but could not resist his ardent solicitations to forward a letter to me. His former one had made so deep an impression on me, that I resolved to run no farther

risques of that sort; and in consequence of this resolution, requested lady Anna Maria Burton, a young lady, a relation of lady Hill's, who was then, and is still on a visit to me, to return his letter, and acquaint him that he might depend on it I never would read a line more that came from him.

Soon after lady Hill returned my visit, and shewed me a letter that captain Hastings had sent her, apologizing for having been the instrument of depriving her of my company, complaining much of my cruelty, and that he had avoided forming any attachment, though many opportunities had offered of his being connected in families

families which would have been greatly advantageous to him, could he have eradicated the impresson I had so early made in his heart: that his brother, and friends, had often upbraided him for what *he* thought meritorious, his constancy to me: that my indifference had determined him immediately to quit England, and that I might be assured he would never more, by his letters, or presence, disturb my repose.

This, you may conclude, my dear, persuaded me I had been deceived by the paragraph before-mentioned, and that, in all probability, it was his brother's marriage which was mentioned

in the papers. I immediately wrote to captain Hastings, dispatching my letter by faithful William, who I believe you did not see when at the Mount, but may remember as he often attended us in our walks, at that dear period of life when plays and toys, were our only pursuits. My orders were, he should not return until he had seen and delivered my letter to captain Hastings. Had he obeyed that command, in all probability I should never more have seen the faithful creature. He did not return till seven days had elapsed (the longest I ever experienced in my life) and then it was to acquaint me of his ill success. All he could learn was, that captain
Hastings

Hastings had left town two days before his arrival there. This intelligence probed me to the heart; my mind gave birth to a thousand painful reflections, and I upbraided myself for the cruel part I had acted, in having given additional weight to the many disappointments my dear Hastings had before experienced on my account. When kind heaven had removed the only bar to our mutual wishes, how could I be so simple to destroy perhaps for ever the blessing which was then offered me, and for which I had so long sighed in vain? Besides, admitting he had been married, was it not possible his wife might,

long since, have paid the debt of nature? Ah! why did not that thought occur to prevent my rashness? But I will not longer comment on a conduct, which, in my reflecting moments, I sincerely condemn, but proceed in my narrative.

Several days past, before I could determine on what step to pursue, in order to regain the haven I had so rashly avoided, and probably I should have continued in that uncertain state till now, had not good William, by eager enquiry, and unremitting diligence learned, that a gentleman, who answered the description of captain Hastings,

Hastings, had passed through Dover, and embarked on board a packet for Calais. My brother being now on a tour, I have written to him to request him to make enquiry after the object so essential to my peace, at the same time enclosing a letter to my wanderer; and though it is impossible for me to receive an answer so soon, yet I am all impatience, and cannot help upbraiding my brother for his want of dispatch, and chiding the lazy movement of time for travelling no faster; as, on the success of my epistle, depends the future fate of your Cassandra; for no longer than my heart has hopes of my dear Hastings's return, can it feel life's impulse. Ex-
cuse

cuse not hearing from me before that happy event takes place, which Heaven grant may be soon!

My esteem and good wishes await your uncle and brother and be assured I am, with the warmest affection,

Your

CASSANDRA BETTESWORTH.

Friday Noon,

From the Same to the Same.

I Wrote to you no longer than two days since; but as I am sure every event that adds to my felicity will be
 sen-

sensibly felt by my amiable, and affectionate Julia, I again take up my pen to acquaint you with the transports of my heart. Yes, my dear brother, and my no less dearest Hastings, have each of them wrote, and they are now on their way to England, as they were to embark in the very next packet. O! my friend, my loved Julia, pity, as well as rejoice at the rapturous fluttrings of my poor breast. And is it possible, and am I still to be happy, still to be requited for my long sufferings! Ah! no! not if there is truth in the assertion, that bliss can kill, as well as sorrow! The latter I am inured to, and there is a solidity of thought attending it,

it, which breaks part of its mighty force, and renders it, in my opinion, more bearable than the riotous tumult of the former. I can hardly support the mighty joy, or see through the joyful tears that are at this time revelling in my eyes. On the arrival of my Hastings and brother, expect to hear from me, but 'till then adieu, but always believe me,

Your affectionate,

C. BETTESWORTH.

P. S. The inclosed is my brother's letter.

My

Paris.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I RECEIVED your favour, found your wanderer, who is now writing to you ; and our return to England will take place by the next packet. I have an opportunity of sending this by Mr. Evans, the gentleman I mentioned to you in a former letter ; a person whose friendship I have experienced, and much esteem. As nothing interesting occurs, I will attempt a description of those places which, accompanied by him, I went to see.

The first was the monastery of Char-teux, the great cloysters of which are
very

very much esteemed on account of some fine paintings in water colours, by Le Brun. They contain the life of St. Bruno, their founder, are in twenty-two pieces, and still very beautiful, though much defaced by time. The friars have, also, another cloyster, or piazza, round the burying ground, which makes a most venerable and awful appearance. The chapel is very neat and pretty, and has some very fine paintings by Bon Boulogne, and other great masters. The refectory, where they dine on Sundays and holy-days, is a large hall, the walls of which are painted in the same manner as those

those at Whitechurch; they have each of them a cell, consisting of a bed room, parlour, and oratory; and behind it, a neat garden. By the rules of the order, they never leave their convent or eat flesh, as other fryars do. We were introduced to one who has been there four years, and is indeed a very venerable old man. He received us with much politeness, walked with us round the garden, recommended to our notice a collection of bees, of which he rears a great many for his amusement. You will think he stands in need of something to entertain him, when I tell you, they never see a woman, and, on particular days, are not even

even permitted to speak to each other. Their dress is a flannel gown, something like that of the Carmelites, but white, and they never wear linen.

From thence we proceeded to the convent of Carmelites, a receptacle for women. The chapel has a beautiful mosaic pavement, the altar is reckoned particularly fine, and the whole is adorned with capital paintings. On the left side going in, is a little chapel, founded by Madame Valliere, mistress to Louis the Fourteenth, and where she lies buried. In it is her picture by Le Brun, in the character of a magdalen. It is reckoned,

oned, both for figure and beauty of expression, one of the finest paintings in the world. From thence we went to La Sorbonne, where Cardinal Richlieu lies buried. His figure is dressed in robes, with an angel weeping over it. It is carved out of one entire piece of ivory, and is really a most beautiful and elegant representation.

From thence we went to the Palais Royal, the residence of the duke of Orleans, to see the galleries, which are reckoned by much the finest in Paris. The pictures are very numerous, and I must see them again, before I can
venture

venture on their description; but hope first, to have the satisfaction of saluting my dear sister in person, and of assuring her, that I am her

Affectionate Brother,

F. BEAUMONT.

LETTER XVIII.

Miss AMBRIDGE to Lady BETTESWORTH.

Seamore Park, Sunday Noon.

WE may, my dear Cassandra, with propriety, stile ourselves partners in every movement of the heart,

heart, as mine, when I read your favour, sensibly partook of all those contending emotions you so feelingly describe, and a flood of tears evinced how much I loved and pitied my friend. As I proceeded, hope, that balm to affliction, beamed a ray of joy, and softly told me, to remember that some events which at first bring most exquisite pain to the human heart, are as often in the end productive of real bliss. That this maxim may take place in regard to my Cassandra, is my first wish. Indeed, it is incited not intirely by friendship, but self-interest claims a part: for there is not a happiness that attends lady Bettsworth
that

that does not leave its pleasing influence in the breast of her Julia. That good William ! His solicitude and anxious attention to render happy his mistress, I shall ever remember with gratitude. Faithful creature ! How ought he to be prized ! There are but few domestics who merit so much applause ; but he has a benefactress, whose benevolence, like that of heaven, needs no prompter, but is always on the wing to reward virtue.

This morning, my uncle and I had a long debate on the uncertainty and changes of all human affairs. He pronounces that, after a few more recitals

recitals and revolutions, I shall absolutely merit the appellation of a stoic, for that I have already acquired the art of extracting pleasure from pain. This assertion took its rise from my saying, I pitied the agitation you experienced when at the Theatre; though, in all probability, that incident might endear you more to your Hastings than any other could, and be productive of many years bliss: for indeed, my dear, however weak as your opinion may be of my skill in judging of future events, yet I am persuaded that, as your trials have been great, so will your future days all be happy, and that the commencement of that period is fast advancing: for although heaven may for a-while withhold bliss from us, in order to prove our fortitude, and make us more worthy to

receive its favours, yet in the end, it is ever sure to reward persevering virtue. This is really my opinion, and I wish you to adopt it, since it will in some measure soften, lessen, and support the weight of those present doubts and anxieties, which I fear but too much prey on your susceptible mind, and perhaps prolong to me one of the greatest blessings I wish for on earth, that of knowing I have a sincere friend.

My best respects attend miss Grenville. My brother is in London, my Guardy still indisposed, and I am, with every wish for your felicity, and the safe and speedy arrival of your amiable Hastings and brother,

Your ever affectionate,

JULIA AMBRIDGE.

L. E. T.

LETTER XIX.

Lady BETTESWORTH to Miss AMBRIDGES

Bettesworth Mount.

A MULTIPLICITY of affairs, my dear Julia, which ever attends a change of life, and which has called much for my attention, I hope will apologize for the long pause I have made, and that you will be assured, however remiss I may have appeared, that there is but one person on earth who claims a greater share of my love and esteem.

I suppose, by this prelude, you will anticipate my felicity, and pronounce the sanction of Hymen already to

have crowned my wishes. What a penetrating genius has my sagacious friend! She has absolutely discovered the whole plot, and therefore I may as well confess. Nine weeks since, I was made happy in becoming the wife of my dear Hastings. My brother accompanying him from France, and being determined immediately on a return again to that kingdom, hurried me into the unpoliteness of not soliciting the honour of your presence on the occasion. I pleaded much for a reprieve of a few months, but the verdict was pronounced by my impatient Frank, and made irresistible by the importunities of my long-suffering Hastings, and therefore your friend was obliged to comply. May I now, Julia, venture to pronounce my happiness compleat, and

and that the days of sorrow will return no more ? I may, if future time is to be correspondent with that which is present ; as my dear husband's tenderness and solicitude to please leave no room in my heart for doubt, or any other passion but those of love, joy, and gratitude, and make every hour glide away on downy pinions. Oh ! happy change ! O ! blissful union ! may I never again lose thy pleasing influence !

Well, after this ejaculation, the effusions of a transported heart, let me acquaint you, Julia, that my brother is still at the Mount, though it was with difficulty we prevailed on him to postpone, for so short a time, his tour ; nor could we succeed 'till the following bribe was offered, that of our accom-

panying him to France when he went, and of first paying a visit to my sister Belford in the north, on which excursion we intend setting off on Wednesday next, and as it is likely we shall be constantly on the move 'till our return to Kent, I shall be deprived, during that period, of the satisfaction of a frequent correspondence with my Julia, a loss I shall much regret. I have many directions to give before we enter on our jaunt, which will oblige me to quit my pen much sooner than I have an inclination for, and to suppress, 'till our return, some things I wish to communicate; but that suppression shall not take place 'till I have executed a command I have just now received from captain Hastings. How soon, my dear, these men assume despotic power! Well, I have promised
to

to love, honour, and obey, and the task will not be unpleasing, whilst his commands are delivered with that enchanting softness, and oblige me, my dear, at the end of them.

Know then, captain Hastings requests yourself and family, will do him the honour to accept his best respects—mine you are always sure of—and that he hopes for the favour of a visit on our return, from yourself, uncle, and brother. A ready compliance in this request, will confer the greatest obligation on the happy

CASSANDRA BETTESWORTH.

P. S. Miss Grenville, miss Harrington, and miss Cornwallis, are to be of our party. They always love

D 4

you.

you. The latter is much indisposed, but it is hoped she will receive benefit from change of air. My brother's respects attend yourself and friends.

LETTER XX.

Miss GRENVILLE to Miss AMBRIDGE.

Bettesworth Mount.

MY DEAR MISS AMBRIDGE,

LADY Bettesworth is (as you will find by the inclosed letter, which she requests me to forward to you) safely arrived in France, and exceedingly

ingly pleased with the place and its inhabitants. I believe her ladyship mentioned to you my intention of accompanying her, as that was my design, but a letter I received from my aunt the morning before we were to set off, forbade that plan taking place, though previously she had given her concurrence to it. How disagreeable is a dependant situation! especially where it is subject to on the caprice of a person in whom old age and infirmities forbid the hope of stability, and render almost impracticable the power of judging properly: though I own I was not displeased at the disappointment, if I may properly call it one. It is a just observation, that it requires some fortitude to fit out the heart for a long journey. However pleased we may at first be with the idea of travelling, when

the hour of departure comes, a thousand things, though trifling in themselves, seem to solicit our stay: especially when we are to leave behind objects that are dear to us. Were Mr. Ambridge to see me now, he would not honour me with the appellation of his second sister; for indeed, my dear, if ever I resembled you in vivacity, it is entirely eradicated. Where is that innocent levity, which once made life agreeable? It is flown for ever, and in its stead, melancholy has taken up its abode in the heart of your Charlotte. Oh! that I could purchase one half hour's personal conversation with you! How cruel is separation from those we love! and what is life without a confidential friend? Our sorrows certainly lose great part of their force by communicating them.

This

This prelude, doubtless you will conclude is meant as a leading thread to the claiming that part in your friendship and advice, which you so obligingly promised me, when at the Mount, and it certainly is so. Lady Bettlesworth being absent—but what of lady Bettlesworth's being absent? Were she present, I should not venture to communicate, what her too nice honour would think incumbent to reveal to my aunt, whose views are confined to grandeur, and whose favour can only be gained by an equal share of riches, and who has no feelings that are interesting to the heart, for love and avarice oppose each other. Therefore it is to you only, my dear miss Ambridge, that I dare relate the story of my folly. But, will you not condemn me for my imprudence, or

chide me for encouraging a passion which, I fear, will not only involve me in misery, but destroy the peace of him whose happiness is infinitely dearer to me than my own? But to arrive at the point intended, and intrust you with the secret of my heart, I am to acquaint you, that a few days after your brother's arrival at the Mount, he met with a young gentleman, an officer, who had been educated at the same academy with himself. He was recruiting in Kent, and not far distant from the Mount. Mr. Ambridge expressed infinite satisfaction at this unexpected meeting, and introduced the amiable stranger to lady Bettsworth. He is, indeed, my dear, "the loveliest youth that ever warmed a virgin's heart."

Lady

Lady Bettsworth was much pleased with his person and conversation. The consequence of this approbation was, a general invitation during his stay in this part. Her ladyship being so much engaged with her pen, allowed me frequent opportunities of being alone with him. I was perhaps less reserved than otherwise I should have been, had I not been brought up among the military line, surrounded by officers from my earliest infancy, and whose easy flutter and attention I had been accustomed to hear, without its making the least impression on me; well knowing, it generally proceeds from nothing more than a polite education. I for sometime received his attention with the same degree of insensibility I had accustomed myself to: but at last, it stole through the avenues of my

my heart, and robbed me of every peaceful moment, excepting those which I could pass with him. He sung enchantingly, his lovely lips and fingers brought music from the flute, which softened my very soul. In this manner one day had he been entertaining me, for near two hours in the Alcove, when on a sudden he threw down the instrument, and exclaimed, "O my God! must I submit to it? and must to-morrow's dawn tear me from all I love?"

I did not perfectly comprehend the meaning of this exclamation, yet my tears began to flow, I could not restrain them. He caught me in his arms, at the same time asking forgiveness, yet pressing me to his bosom. He declared himself the most unfortunate

fortunate of men; he loved me with the purest affection, yet his situation made it criminal in presuming to do so; that his parents had died when he was very young: that his father preferring temporary gratifications to the future prospects of his family, had robbed him of that course which might perhaps have procured him the blessing he then sighed for; his pay, he added, as an officer, was his only dependance, but there should be no dangerous honour that he would not encounter, in order to acquire that affluence which might entitle him to ask my hand, would I flatter him, if future events removed the present obstacle, that then I would condescend to be his.

This honest declaration called from me one equally candid. I assured him
of

of my partiality, at the same time, representing how improper it was to give way to it, as my every expectation of future wealth, depended on the benevolence of my aunt, whose favours were exceedingly precarious: and admitting I should be happy enough to share them, my fortune could not exceed the poor pittance of two thousand pounds: that she had not long since introduced a young gentleman to me, and recommended him as a lover, one who, she said, merited her most sanguine esteem; that fear made me not totally reject his overtures, though I assured Mr. Percy (the name of your brother's friend) that I had given my aunt's favourite no very great encouragement, as there was nothing in him, though far from being a disagreeable

agreeable object, capable of kindling in my breast that soft sensation called love, and instinct tells me, that is a most essential ingredient in cementing the bands of Hymen.

I farther assured Mr. Percy, that from inclination I should ever be his, and should it be in my power to avoid it, he might depend on my never entering into any other engagement, than that which my heart felt in favour of himself; that I would confide in Providence, and hoped it would facilitate those events which might bring us together, and render us happy.

This mutual permutation of our hearts being sealed, he that evening took leave, after requesting I would indulge him in hearing from me. This request I was doubtful if I should

should comply with, well knowing vanity too often tempts men to forfeit their honour, by exposing the woman who has foolishly put herself in their power; and, to strengthen my fears, the poet's caution immediately occurred:

“What agonies that woman undergoes,

“Whose hand the traitor threatens to expose;

“Who rashly trusting, dreads to be deceived;

“And lives for ever, to that dread enslav'd!

However, Julia, I was not rude enough to repeat those lines to him, though I expressed my objection to a scribbling correspondence, and persevered for a few moments in my denial; but at last he charmed away my scruples, and the next morning set

out

out to join his regiment, which was then at Dover, and under orders to hold themselves in readiness to embark at a moment's warning; but for what place was unknown. He proceeded but a few miles on his journey, when a countermand of the orders he had before received, returned him to me again. He was to continue his recruiting service for three weeks longer, most of which time I was blessed with his company, and then bade adieu to every happiness. Since which, I have received the inclosed, and several other letters from him. I answered them all by very long ones, foolishly thinking, by talking a great deal of nonsense, to hide my passion from every eye but his own, should they be unfortunate enough to be seen by any others; but, alas! my friend, how blind is love!

I have

I have just been reading the copies over, and being now more composed, blush to find they contain sentiments the most tender. It is a difficult matter to counterfeit indifference, and form a veil of sufficient force to hide the heart, when it is truly attached. True love will declare its influence, and baffle and deceive even reason itself. Those lines which I borrowed from the opera of Artaxerxes, and which you will meet with in my last letter to Mr. Percy, and which I have pretended to erase, is a proof of it. I thought them too tender to flow from the pen of a girl, therefore drew the instrument several times over them. That done, I applauded my prudence; but love guided the pen, and left the lines sufficiently clear for him to steal the contents. However, I have that

con-

confidence in my lover, that I believe he will never expose me. No, not even should compulsion (which heaven forbid!) force me into the arms of another. Yet my situation is so amazingly embarrassing, I know not how to conduct myself. Mr. Percy thinks me bound to him by all the ties of love and honour; my heart confesses this obligation; but my aunt, no doubt, will think it incumbent on me to give way to her wiser dictates, and that my dependant situation ought to claim obedience; a situation, which you, my dear miss Ambridge, can have no conception of, unless you will take the trouble of reading the unfortunate beginning, and journey of my life; a trouble I am much ashamed of, but have no words sufficient to apologize for.

But

But here, my dear, I am interrupted. My cousins, James and Louisa Nugent, are this moment alighted from their carriage. Adieu my friend.

Saturday Morning.

Now, my dear, to return to my story. Death early deprived me of my indulgent mother. My father was a colonel in his majesty's army, and I their only child. He was a gentleman by birth, and heir to a large estate. He had unfortunately been from his youth accustomed to every train of elegant extravagance. Dress, company, and pleasure, he could not exist without: nay every allurement had its charm, and caught his attention;

tion; yet virtue was by far the most predominant movement of his soul. Hospitality, compassion, and benevolence, never blazed more conspicuously in any breast than it did in his. His purse was opened to the distressed, his doors to his friends, his tables spread for the poor; in short, Julia, my dear parent's fortune, inadequate to his wishes, was the only bar to his not rendering every one happy that wished for his assistance; but that, time and those favourite passions had almost totally exhausted, and at the period of my mother's life, he had but little more than his pay as an officer to support himself and family. At the age of twelve years I was taken from school, and lived with my father for the space of two years and one month, in the barracks of Chatham; at the expiration

ration of which time my dear father died. The debts he had contracted, far exceeded what he had left to discharge them; and thus bereft of every support, I was taken an orphan to my aunt's, who kindly received me, and has promised to let me be a sharer with two other relations of hers, in every proof of her esteem and affection; but I can plainly perceive, that the two latter are endeavouring to supplant me, and hourly insinuating themselves into her favour: whilst I, your Charlotte, taught from infancy to be unswayed by interest, cannot substitute art for candour, and perhaps my sincerity may rob me of those small expectations, which heaven has left to sustain me from despair. Alas! Julia, since I have learned to reflect (which is but within these few days) my helm
of

of reason is almost lost. Numerous are the fears that conspire to destroy my peace: I think I see my aunt's affections much decreased since my residence with lady Bettsworth: may she not then compel me into an alliance with this youth of her esteem? every way I turn presents nothing but disagreeable ideas. But to make you, my Julia, more particularly acquainted with the embarrassing circle that surrounds me, and the lengths I have gone in this clandestine correspondence (improper as it may be) yet I cannot bring my heart to wish it suppressed."

I have taken the liberty to inclose in a packet, and sent by the stage, Mr. Percy's epistles, accompanied by scrawls, that will prove the folly of your friend, and who, as she said

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before, by repeating the foolish chit-chat of the town, and by assuming a levity which was foreign from her heart, thought to gain a deception, but any impartial eye would perceive them to be the production of Almighty love. Well, I am an unfortunate girl, yet if my dear miss Ambridge does not totally condemn my indiscretion, and will oblige me with the favour of her advice, I will not despair, but endeavour to look on my present uneasiness, as the presages of future good, and account my ease as only lent out for a time.

Mr. Percy was at lady Bettsworth's wedding, and did not leave us till two days after her ladyship's departure for the north. He is much esteemed by captain Hastings and Mr. Beaumont.

In

In short, my partial heart says, it is only to see him, and to admire. Excuse my weakness, my dear miss Ambridge, and believe me always, with affection,

Your most sincere,

C. GRENVILLE.

LETTER XXI.

Lady BETTESWORTH, to Miss AMBRIDGE.

Turenne.

MY DEAR JULIA,

WE are now at Tours in Turenne, and most romantic and pleasing is the situation of our villa on the side

of a rock, which runs on for three miles, rising about a hundred yards above the Loire, along which there is a range of houses, with intervals of trees and shrubs, &c. which form a most picturesque appearance. Many of the houses are considerable, belonging to the most opulent inhabitants of Tours, and have each of them a terras, that commands a fine view of the bridge and town, with the two great churches, which are noble pieces of antiquity. The Loire is the pride of France, and in itself a beautiful river, but the banks of it are not so pleasing as our Thames. The air here, at this time, is exceedingly soft and warm, with a fine clear sky, which the inhabitants say is generally the case. I thank God the climate has contributed already so much to mis-
Con-

Conwallis's recovery, that I have great hopes her health will be perfectly restored before we leave France. At Paris, miss Harrington and miss Conwallis were greatly delighted with seeing the chimney-sweepers in bag wigs, and shoe-blacks, cooks, and barbers, with powdered heads and solitaires. Indeed, the foppery of the French nation is better calculated to please children, than people of a serious turn.

We rested at Paris some time before we set out for the southern parts of France, and received great civility there, from your friends the duke and duchess of D—.

In three days from thence we reached
Tours, passing through Estampes,
E 3 Orleans.

Orleans, and Blois, and suffered but little inconvenience upon the road, as the inhabitants make it their study to please and accommodate the travellers. On the road the axle-tree of our coach broke down, but fortunately we were within two leagues of Amiens, and stayed in it till a French voiture came to us from town. This accident happened on the other side of Paris, and upon a very disagreeable wet night; but happy, we were not the worse for it, though I had many fears for poor miss Conwallis.

We passed over a very fine campaign country from Montreal to Clermont, and by the prince of Conde's palace at Chantilly. I dare say you have heard that the people here have the *savoir vivre* beyond any other nation.

tion. I grant it, but it must be understood they are living upon little. They are lively and good humoured, seem never out of spirits, and have a natural ease and politeness beyond the English, for whom they have great respect. We found at Tours many of our friends, and passed our time exceedingly agreeable. The convents are numerous, and were I to give you a particular description of them, they would more than fill my paper. The marmontien on the side of this place is supposed to be the richest in France. High mass is performed with more ceremony than devotion, but it is extremely striking and fine. In short, my dear, every thing pleases and calls for attention, yet I often wish to be at the Mount, still making good the old saying—home is home, let it be ever

so homely. We sometimes talk of you, but always love you, and shall ever be, with

Sincere affection,

Your

C. BETTESWORTH.

P. S. Our esteem and respects await your uncle and brother. I do not send you a direction where to find us, as I do not know how to fix it, being determined not to continue long in any one place, till our return to Kent; and if I should not be so punctual a correspondent during that period, impute it not to a decrease of affection, but unavoidable necessity.

L E T-

LETTER XXII.

Mr. PERCY to Miss GRENVILLE.

Dover Castle.

AN absence of a day is justly said to be an age to those who sincerely love; then what must a fortnight's be, with the additional aggravation of a total suppression of pen and ink? I assure you, my dearest miss Grenville, I have felt it with the severest anxiety, yet a remedy was amongst one of the impossibles. The settling my recruiting accounts, with a thousand other interruptions, have rendered all my attempts for that pur-

pose of no effect, and now I have taken up my pen, find myself much at a loss to express what I feel at the idea of being, perhaps for an age, parted from all I love, as I did to get the better of those obstacles which have so long opposed our correspondence. Indeed, my dear Charlotte, were it not for that soothing assurance you honour me with, of living in your esteem, I should be the most miserable of human beings. How much do I regret the loss of those blissful moments I have past at Bettesworth Mount! Dear scenes, when will you return? Be assured, all my endeavours shall be put in motion for that purpose, and should I gain but one day's interview with my Charlotte before we leave Dover, it would render me more happy than any other event could,

could, except that supreme blessing, the being united to her for life.

Our destination at present is unknown, though some say part of our regiment will shortly proceed for Portsmouth, and there embark on board the fleet, which is expected soon to sail in pursuit of the French squadron. If that should be the case, it will be my tour of duty. Every preparation is making in daily expectation of our route. Let me intreat I may have the happiness of hearing from you by the return of post. Tell me you are well, and that I have still, and ever shall have a place in that lovely breast, and you will lighten every care which is destined to be the lot of Charles Percy.

The Sunday after I left the Mount, I arrived at Chatham, and walked the terras before the barracks, where you have passed so many happy hours. I assure you they were the only happy moments I have experienced since I bade you adieu; you were constantly in my idea, and my imagination almost embodied thought. I fancied a thousand times, my dearest Charlotte, that I saw you at the windows of your former apartments, enjoying the serenity of the evening, and breathing to every odour a double charm. How cruel was that demon that called me from this pleasing reverie!

A court-martial this moment wings me from my love. Adieu; may every blessing be the attendant of my dearest miss Grenville.

If you think proper, oblige me in presenting my best respects to lady Anna Maria Burton, who I hope has not yet left you, and tell yourself, I am, with sincerest ardour,

Your affectionate,

C. PERCY

LETTER XXIII.

Miss GRENVILLE to Mr. PERCY.

Sunday Night, Half past Twelve o'Clock,

Bettefworth Mount.

I Suppose before this late hour, nature's soft nurse has lulled all at Dover Castle in her downy pinions. Old Somnus and family have been creeping about the Mount for some time

time past. He has inspired lady Anna Maria Burton with so much manners, that my attention is called for every instant, lest she should fall from her chair. My cousin Nugent too is giving me strong indications that Morpheus is conducting him through some pleasing scenes, for I hear a very composed note in the next room. In short, I am the only one in the house unnoticed by the sleepy god; yet I have been reading for more than four hours past, in order to obtain a small odour from his poppies, but in vain. However, I have another charm which I will endeavour to allure him with: I will, for half an hour, employ my pen in thanking you, dear Sir, for your favour of the fourth instant, which I received yesterday evening. Be assured, I feel the professions
you

you ever in my favour, with that sense of esteem which is ever due to so much partiality.

I need not tell you how distressing it is to bid adieu to our friends, as every susceptible heart, I believe, can conceive the pain it gives. I felt it, I assure you, yet could not help hoping you might postpone your intended journey for the next day, to the day after, and that I should once more have had the pleasure of seeing you before you left—. This idea amused me from Friday evening till late on Saturday, and then I began to look over my music books, in order to find your favourite song, "Shepherds I have lost, &c." That acquisition gained, I hummed over the tune, I cannot give my chanting a more harmonious appellation, for my heart
was

was too much deprest for my tongue to produce any pleasing sound. When I had arrived at that expressive part—She's gone perhaps for ever, and for ever—I substituted a *he* for a *she*, and will not pretend to tell you the anxiety I felt, as I can never form the idea of my friends being exposed to so uncertain an element as that of the water without giving me pain.

I have heard from lady Bettesworth, and shall stay at the Mount till I hear again. She desired I would do so. After that, I must be immured in the close chamber of my gouty aunt. I last Thursday received a letter from the latter. She requests my company for a few days, she longs to see her dear girl (is not that prettily expressed?) and hopes I will give her my company
for

for a few days. Well, I shall go, filial duty, joined by interest, calls loudly for my obeying the summons, though do not let that circumstance prevent my having the pleasure of hearing from you : should you continue any time on Terra Firma, as my visit will not exceed the length of a day, and when I shall set out on that excursion I cannot tell you : but this I will tell you, I confide in the promises you gave me, that no eye but your own shall see the impropriety of my pen.

Lady Anna Maria this instant begins to rub her pretty eyes, and complainingly asks, half a sleep and half awake, "Are you not tired, miss Grenville?" I have made no answer to that demand, but still continue scribbling on, although I am convinced the dear girl wishes

wishes me folded in the arms of forgetfulness, and is almost fatigued out of her complaisance, and just on the verge of resigning her good manners by refusing to sit any longer. Well, Brizo is a most indulgent friend, I might have importuned old Somnus to all perpetuity before he would have blest me with repose; but the good Dame has just come to save me from the imputation of being too great an intruder, and has this instant stroked her soft and delicate hand over my eye-lids, and I will obey her gentle invitation as soon as I have offered up a small ejaculation for the preservation of my friends at the castle.

Well, that's done; and now for a specimen of my good breeding. —

“ When

"When you please, lady Anna Maria, I am ready to attend you." The sweet girl smiles approbation, therefore, dear Sir, adieu for to night.

Monday Morning, Six o'Clock.

Aurora and I jumped up together. She is wiping the dew from the spangled grass, whilst I sit down to tell you I do not half like your conjecture, that you are to make one of the fleet, as most likely, if that is the case, you will have to encounter with great guns, which I have an utter aversion to. I am an immense coward myself, and shocked at your danger, even at a review of it, in imagination. Heaven protect you all, and grant I may, once more, have the happiness of seeing
you

you before you leave shore, and that my fears for you may be as groundless as my esteem for you is sincere.

I have a thousand questions to ask you about Chatham. Was you in any of the apartments? The officers barracks, I think, appear exceedingly pleasing when entering the front gate. Their being built on so high an eminence much recommends them to the eye: the trees that shade the terras, and the chairs which are placed on the walk, not only bespeak an elegance, but add much to the ease and convenience of the officers. You traversed there.—Was it in the evening? If so, I suppose a band of music was playing, and a multitude of company were assembled. Those two, blended together, formed the amusements of the
many

many happy evenings I have past there. Dear scenes ! will you never more return ? I fear not : but in every state I shall be, with sincerest esteem, and every wish for

Your happiness,

C. GRENVILLE.

P. S. Lady Anna Maria returns her respects ; I had something very particular to say to you, but it is flown.— Perhaps I may recover the fugitive, and if I do, it shall perch in my next letter, which I promise shall be as soon as you answer this. The dear little linnet you gave me is sick : in short, that, and every other object, seems to mourn your absence.

L E T.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. PERCY to Miss GRENVILLE.

Dover Castle.

MY DEAR MISS GRENVILLE.

IF many attempts, all of which have proved impracticable by the interruption of my friends, who have come to take leave of us, can apologize for my having so long deferred answering your dear letter (that letter, which merits many thanks, and which conveyed so much happiness to my heart) you will surely seal my forgiveness, by
 letting

letting me hear from you immediately on the receipt of this.

As I read your dear epistle, the agreeable image of lady Anna Maria frequently presented itself to my imagination in the same position you so well describe. I am exceedingly pleased your amiable friend escaped a fall from her chair, though a little angry at the impatience expressed for bed, as it might have deprived me of one of the greatest pleasures of my life, that of a long letter from my Charlotte. But is it not time I should begin my little bickering, for I assure you I have one in store. Though perhaps you will say, retaliation in some cases, is only the production of ungenerous minds, yet that shall not deter me. Jealousy and complaining, as you once observed,

observed on a similar occasion, are privileges allowed to lovers, therefore I shall certainly make you sensible of the predicament you have lain yourself under.

So, after you had attempted to go to sleep, and in vain; nay, after repeated trials of four hours length, you sit down (knowing no other method to invoke the sleepy God) than by writing to me, and when your eyes began to draw straws, you left off, but not till you had given just applause to Brizo for relieving you from your task: you then went to bed, and I perhaps, was immediately erased from your memory. That thought, at first, disconcerted me, but the proof you honoured me with of my being remembered in the morning, has banished all disagreeable suspicions, your supposition of the soft
nurses

nurses indulgence, I assure you, my dear Charlotte, was premature, she did not arrive at my room during the night. Justly is it said,

“ She, like the world, her ready visit pays,
 “ Where fortune smiles; the wretched she
 forsakes.

“ Swift on her downy pinions flies from woe,
 “ And lights on lids unsullied with a tear.

though I assure you I did not frighten her away by that unmanly expression of grief, yet I was very miserable in consequence of some orders the colonel received that day, and which are not as yet made known; but it is whispered, and that with the appearance of truth, that our stay in Dover will not exceed a week, and that for some time we shall plough the briny ocean.

As my only comfort, during that period, will be my dear miss Gren-

ville's letters, I once more repeat my request of hearing from her soon. Yes, my dear Charlotte, if I have any part in your affection it will plead for the execution of this solicitation immediately; for should I go without hearing from you, so weak is my heart, that distrust and heaviness would be my only companions.

Whether I shall be able to gain the mighty boon I so ardently wish for, of visiting the Mount, once more before we leave England, I cannot say; for that, as well as other objects, fate has hid in painful uncertainty; yet all my endeavours are put in action for that purpose, and I will hope may prove successful. It is an old aphorism that some comfort attends even the greatest misfortunes; if I have any to sooth the thought of parting with my Charlotte, it is, that
our

our stay from harbour, is conjectured, will not exceed a month, and our return to England not more than three months.

If my picture can be the least pleasing, you may be assured of having it, I have given orders for that purpose, though it is not yet quite finished. The reason assigned for this delay is, the limner has been indisposed. What a happiness would yours afford me, were I honoured with it! lovers will have their wishes: pardon mine, if they are too aspiring.

You mentioned a something in your last which took wing: if the run-away is returned, pray direct its course to Dover. I have a little of that imperfection of nature called curiosity, and any object that has claimed attention

from my dear miss Grenville, cannot
be indifferent to her

Ever affectionate,

CHARLES PERCY.

P. S. If you please, always remember me to lady Anna Maria.

LETTER XXIV.

Miss GRENVILLE to Mr. PERCY.

Bettesworth Mount.

I TAKE up the feathered instrument
in obedience to your request, and
to indulge myself in one of the greatest
pleasures I can at this time enjoy—that
of corresponding with a person I much
esteem. Though do not be too much
elated

elated at this declaration, as I am going to declare, that had not self-gratification been the most predominant of those two inducements, I believe you would not have heard from Charlotte Grenville this month. At the moment I received yours, I was muttering to myself, "*Hors de vue, Hors de Souvenir,*" and felt a little swell of resentment rising in my breast at the long pause you had made, and the omission would have justified my silence, and perhaps made you sensible of the uneasiness that attends disappointed expectation. Pray be more punctual for the future, or expect a scolding twice as long as the fleet. Indeed I am half a mind to begin now, and would, were we near enough to make up the quarrel immediately; but as that is not the case, I believe I shall excuse you for

this time, provided you attribute just applause to my forgiving disposition, and inclose a few beg-pardons in your next favour. In sober sadness I was not pleased, but your welcome letter has banished all my frowns. And now (for my friend did not venture to rally me till I was made happy) lady Anna Maria is laughing at the grave face I have worn for some days past. She just now put her ivory book into my hand. I suspected there was some roguery in it, and so there was; for I found myself and sweet little linner, drawn in a most desponding attitude; the first addressing the latter in the following words: "O! when will the dear man come, that all my doubts and fears may vanish into air?"

You cannot conceive what a crying face her ladyship had given me. I am
now

now diverted with it, but should have been far otherwise had I seen it a few hours ago; for when the heart is in pain, it does not like to be trifled with. Lady Anna Maria is now making me a very prim courtesy, and requesting I will ask you if you have heard of the celebrated beauty lately imported from Italy to London. She walks the park, Kensington, &c. sets all male hearts on fire, and renders abortive the charms of every other fair. She defies Cupid, unless his arrows are directed by the hand of nobility. This last assertion, lady Anna Maria says, is a pleasing one, or we second-hand belles should be for condemning her without a hearing, and crush her without regret. The tongue of scandal says, her husband rewards her for a faux-pas she fell into, with a settlement of two hundred pounds a

F 4

year.

year. My mad friend exclaims, who would be good, if virtue is to be neglected, and vice rendered flourishing and happy? She has half a mind to believe we have been mistaken in our notions of virtue, as we have been in our calculation of time, and that vice is really virtue, from its meeting with such indulgent rewards. The above are her own words, and she desires your opinion. Pray inclose it in your next favour, and do not condemn me for this request.

One much harder to resolve was put to me the other day, and the letter that contains it is now before me. The question was as follows: the gentleman, (for indeed it was a male I was corresponding with) in the first place announces me a novice in love; in the next, desires me to tell him the power of
of

of that passion. My answer was, "Sir, you seem to have diverted yourself with my simplicity in not knowing what love is, yet you wish me to determine you in that point. How very inconsistent is the request to the assertion of my ignorance! However, I will indulge you with my opinion, which is formed on a remark I have made; and that is, that as many people complain of the blind god's rigour, and but few or none applaud his indulgence, I conclude him a foe to rest.

So ended my epistle to the gay Philander; and now, from my declaring the god a foe to rest, I suppose you will attribute my sleepless nights to his influence. I will not at present dispute the point, but request, as I love to be doubly armed, that you will give me your opinion too, on this important

subject, that I may be prepared, should the abovementioned gentleman want a farther explanation of the Deity's power: besides, my emulation for science is much increased by a declaration I once heard you pronounce, which was in these words: "I should despise an ignorant woman, and could not even *pretend* to love her." Surely, ignorance must be a great impediment with you, when it can exclude even the *appearance* of love, as a semblance of that passion in men, is so easily acquired. But I really believe *you* are an exception to this general rule: it must be so, if the old adage may be depended on, that the face has a connection with the sentiments of the soul. But, bless me! where am I running to, exceeding far the bounds ascribed to a female pen! besides, on recollection, I believe I should

should continue my bickering strain, as you talk of chastisement, after my importuning the god of sleep for more than four hours, before I would venture to address you. This I did in hopes that, from his enlivening power, I should have acquired some sprightly ideas, and might the next morning (for I did not intend writing sooner) have performed, in the scribbling way, something entertaining; but finding the old Trojan was determined to be averse to my slumbers, until I had entered on some pleasing amusement, in which he knew it would be mortifying for me to leave off, I seized my pen, being pretty sure my head, without sleep, would be more clouded the next day, than it was at that time; and to have postponed answering your letter longer, was a circumstance I could not

think of, as it might have been attended with disagreeable consequences. I was afraid of Mars beating the march on a sudden, and your taking flight.

From another part of my letter you have drawn an unjust suspicion. You say, "When my eyes began to draw straws I left off, and went to bed, and perhaps you, during the night, was erased from my memory." No! your idea was not excluded: I had a very unpleasing dream. Fancy represented you—but I will not mortify myself with a repetition, for I do not like to be rivaled even in a dream. But let me give you a caution; take care of your heart amongst the Dover lasses.

The pleasing hope you gave me in your last favour has added strength to my wishes, and I shall anticipate your
coming

coming to Bettefworth Mount with the utmost impatience.

I expect and hope you will allow I merit a volume for this long letter. *Mon Dieu!* say you, how shall I perform the task? Do not be frightened, my friend, at the review; all the obstacles that oppose it are easily removed by the following mode of proceeding. Do as I do, determine to put down every idea that occurs without any amendment, or regard to propriety. That is my method, or I should not have deferred till this time, thanking you for your obliging offer of the picture. You cannot doubt your portrait being very pleasing to me: for when the bright similitude I view—Good Heavens! I was going to run on again unmindful of decorum, discretion, *et cetera*, and lay open to you all my

my thoughts concerning you, and much could I say on the subject, might I indulge my fancy; but as that is not proper, you will do me the favour to *suppose* what I think.

This horrible scrawl calls for many apologies. My pen has lost its strait path. "Full of blots too," you will say, "emblematic of female giddiness." But the truth is, the speed of hurry and impatience, lest this should be too late for the post, the cause, and not any blameable conduct in

Your sincere,

C. GRENVILLE.

Since I wrote the above, I received a letter from the gentleman I before mentioned. He seems perfectly satisfied with my definition of love, and

con-

concludes me, as well as himself, to be under the influence of the blind god; as he observed, he says, when at the Mount, miss Grenville to be constantly walking about the room, and never at rest, and that himself is for ever roaming and unhappy. But for fear (observe how tender I am of your peace of mind) this love-talking gentleman should occasion a little palpitation at your heart, let me acquaint you it is only my cousin Nugent I have been corresponding with, and I think he cannot excite jealousy by his attention to

C. GRENVILLE.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

Mr. PERCY to Miss GRENVILLE.

Tuesday Morning, Dover Castle.

MY dear miss Grenville's letter gave me infinite pleasure, for which I thank her sincerity.

Yesterday morning the regiment was in the field, my having sprained my ancle excused my attendance, during which time, being quite alone, I had the pleasure of exercising my imagination, which conveyed me to the Mount, and there kept me enjoying for a time, all the happiness of supreme esteem, and unceremonial friendship. This is an allowable cheat on the mind, and a delusion the most innocent. I
much

much wish to say, when the blest moment shall arrive to make it more than a dream; for, indeed, I hope soon to realise it. To explain the ground of this hope, I have applied to my uncle for permission of absence for a few days, he being colonel and commanding officer of the regiment; and though he has not yet pronounced my happiness, his looks did not bid me despair.

My best respects attend lady Anna Maria. I join in sentiment with a favourite author of hers, who says;

“Vice may allure us mortals as she will,

“Yet vice, is vice, and virtue, virtue still.”

There is no one inhabitant of the earthly globe but is destined to feel pain. The evils which befall the virtuous part of it, are softened by the influence of a good conscience; whilst those

those which are the lot of the vicious, are imbittered by the sting of a conscious guilt. It is easy therefore to distinguish whether vice or virtue is preferable.

But why am I moralizing on a subject of gravity, when I meant only a little amusing chit-chat, in order to furnish my dear Charlotte with topics for her next lively letter?

I cannot be so polite as your cousin was, to side with you in your definition of love. I think you have done the blind deity injustice, in painting his rigour, and omitting his superior indulgencies. Love is like friendship, it sweetens life, and softens every care, and is the greatest blessing we mortals can enjoy. Its very pains are justly said to be pleasing. Love animates our ambition, takes danger from the cannon, defies

defies the point of the sword, spurs on the desire of life, and makes every toil easy and pleasant. Without its soothing influence, I should at this time be wretched; for it is only in the dear hope of soon seeing, and one day being united to my Charlotte, that I wish to live, and the first of those pleasing ideas is this moment strengthened by a message I have received from my uncle to attend him. Heaven grant it may be to seal the passport to my love!

Adieu my Charlotte, for the present. By and by you shall know the event of this citation.

Tuesday Evening, Six o'Clock.

It is now some hours since I put down my pen, during all which time (excepting a few moments I spent with
my

my uncle) I have been endeavouring to shake enough of my dejection off to enable me to take it up again : but indeed my dear Charlotte, there is but one thing that could eradicate the unhappiness I feel, and that would be a countermand of the decree which I heard pronounced this morning. What decree? you will say; and no doubt blame me for the uneasiness this prelude will occasion you; therefore, to torture you no longer with suspense, know we are destined to sail under the protection of the fleet a few leagues, then to bid it adieu, and make the best of our way to East-Florida in America, where it is most likely we shall continue for some years. What must be the consequence of so long an absence, I tremble to think of.

I am

I am now disgusted with the army: it is a shew of happiness without the substance. Its having the power of separating us from our dearest friends, ought to make it shunned by all susceptible minds. Good heaven! how cruel is it to tear me from all I hold dear on earth, and rend asunder two hearts, which I flatter myself are bound together by mutual attachment, and every tie of love and honour! think my Charlotte, what I felt at the time I heard it, for it is impossible for me to describe the exquisite pain. If I ever should see this happy shore again, there may be no such person as miss Grenville to bless my return; for ah! she may be forced into the arms of another! dreadful suggestion! in short, my mind can produce nothing but fears: and O, my love, should those fears ever be realized,

undone

undone will be the peace of your Percy. Think of that, and let steady adherence to our mutual vows secure me that mansion of all my bliss, your dear affections; mine be assured are unalterably fixed on my Charlotte.

When our embarkation will take place, I cannot say; some announce immediately; others, that the fleet is not, nor cannot be ready for sea some weeks to come. Which soever it be, let me entreat I may have the happiness of hearing from you soon, as it will in a great degree soften the rigour of my fate. You need not, my dear Charlotte, be apprehensive of any bad consequence from your letters, for should fate, which heaven forbid, tear you for ever from me, be assured *they* will remain a profound secret to all but your Percy. The accusation, I own,

is

is but too just, that vanity often tempts a man to expose the woman who has honoured him with her confidence; but he who does it, must be a villain, and unworthy the appellation of a gentleman. My heart is, and I hope ever will be a stranger to so base and unpardonable a crime. But were my Charlotte's letters open to the world, they could not injure her, but be proofs of her good sense, susceptibility of heart, and rectitude of mind, and evince how unworthy I should be of the honour I now aspire to, that of being united to the most amiable of her sex. May every blessing be the lot of my dearest girl, and a few months restore us to each other, never more to part.—So prays her ever

Affectionate,

CHARLES PERCY.

L E T-

LETTER XXVI.

Miss GRENVILLE to Mr. PERCY.

Bettesworth Mount.

DEAR SIR,

YOU did me but justice in supposing the prelude to the second part of your letter would excite anxiety, for it really did so. I could hardly gain fortitude sufficient to proceed in the perusal-way till I could arrive at the event you mention, which event I felt with equal pain. A banishment from dear Old England, for so long a time, must be very disagreeable; especially if we are to leave behind those whom friendship, esteem, &c. have made essential

essential to our happiness. Those sentiments which you aver in my favour are too flattering not to be pleasing, and let me intreat you to believe are returned with equal regard, and that I desire no greater blessing than to have it in my power to evince the sincerity of my heart. But fortune, at this time, puts a cruel bar to that wished-for happiness, and—I was going to say—perhaps she means never to remove it, but I will not pronounce a sentence so rash; for to doubt the protection and indulgence of Providence, may be to merit its correction; I therefore hope that pillar of the heart and supporter of human fortitude, will prompt me up in pleasing anticipation of your return, and of our future mutual happiness. The sentiments you avow, in regard to honour, I am convinced are sincere,

and that no event of fortune or time, could induce you to depart from them. Heaven only knows whether destiny, or the arbitrary will of those on whom our worldly support depends, may prevail on us to comply with things which are contrary to our inclination; but were we to suffer, or be censured for that compliance, it would be cruel indeed; but a generous mind will never inflict a punishment so unmerited. The space between the lines in the beginning of this letter will persuade you I meant to make it but a short one: that really was my intention, I designed to have sealed its passport last evening, lest the drum should have beaten, you embarked and run from me before this could have arrived at Dover; but being informed, just as I had proceeded over the first face of the paper, that your

uncle

uncle was in London, and that your embarkation could not possibly take place sooner than six or seven weeks from this time, I have contracted its space, and mean to tell you, my aunt called on me the other day; for I have not yet obeyed her summons in paying my respects. She has not yet moved into town, nor does she seem now to intend it. She sometimes talks of a trip to France; at other of a visit to some relations, who live about a hundred miles from the Mount, and no doubt wishes her dear niece to accompany her, but I know not yet how fortune means to dispose of me; though this I know, the old lady's talk almost froze me. She suspects that I have parted with a small corner of my heart, without her approbation. When the charge was made, I half rose from my

G 2

chair,

chair, in order to run out of the room; but the recollection that flight might be esteemed a tacit acknowledgment of guilt, I recovered my seat again, and was just on the brink of exclaiming, "Happy are they who have no expectations, for they shall not be disappointed;" when a tender expression which escaped her lips, repelled my exclamation, and a little thawed me, though I am not yet perfectly recovered.

This scrawl has been the production of several sittings, and is quite disjointed by the frequent interruptions I have had. I can hardly take up my pen before it is announced that somebody is coming: and I have this instant received a message from a lady, an intimate acquaintance of lady Bettsworth, who resides about three miles from

from hence, informing me I may expect her company at dinner. Good heaven, how I am teased ! I almost wish I was at rest in some little quiet habitation under ground, and should entirely wish it, were it not for one inducement, and that, I own, makes me desirous of being a little longer *above* ground.

I sincerely echo the conclusion of your last letter, but cannot help fearing that event will never take place. You see I am desponding again, and going to quit the supporting pillar which just now I flew to, and philosophically relied on in every threatening danger. Well, I will put my trust in it once more, and leave future events to be unfolded by that never-failing discoverer, old grey-bearded Time.

I am sorry for your hurt, but hope before this time you are perfectly recovered.

Why cannot I acquire your pleasing imagination. If I could, my friends would be seldom alone, or, more properly expressed, I but seldom at home.

Lady Anna Maria is still with me, and bids me not forget her best wishes.

The lady who dines with me is now coming up the avenue; therefore, as Mandane says to Arbaces;

“ Adieu thou lovely youth,

“ Let hope thy fears remove,

“ Preserve thy faith and truth,

“ But never doubt my love.”

A line from you soon, and a promise of being at the Mount before you leave England, would make exceeding happy,

C. GRENVILLE.

L E T.

LETTER XXVII.

*Miss AMBRIDGE to Miss GRENVILLE.**Seamore Park.*

MY DEAR MISS GRENVILLE,

A FEW days before the date of your favour, I received an invitation from the countess of D—, whose seat is situated about thirty miles from the park, requesting my company for a few days, she intending soon to embark for Ireland. She was a very old acquaintance of my aunt Seymore's, and is a very old lady. This last circumstance made it not so pleasing; but I being (as you say) a little tired of life, wished

for a change, and after obtaining leave from my uncle, in high spirits, ordered my band-box, jumpt into the *vis-a-vis*, and whisked away to rural magnificence, from whence I did not return till late last evening, which deprived me of the pleasure of receiving your favour sooner, and returning you thanks for the confidence you honour me with.

But really, my dear, how could you be so rash to engage your heart for so long a voyage? What, to America! sure you did not reflect on the distance. But to be serious, and after many beg-pardons for the definition I am going to make, give me leave to tell you, a great deal of wit bespeaks tranquillity of heart, and high as you are in my esteem, yet the gentle Percy claims a greater share of my pity. His letters bespeak the honest influence of a sincere and
steady

steady affection; yours are evidently of too sprightly a turn to incline one to believe them the production of much sorrow, however you may fancy you love. That your partiality is prompted by the little urchin, I make no doubt, but I believe you will not, my Charlotte, and should be exceedingly sorry if you should, break your little heart, if disappointments should be your lot.

But will you not be displeased at my candour, and the liberty I have taken? Or will you honour me with the name of Afraca? I think I merit the latter, from my daring to do justice, and hope my dear miss Grenville will think so too, when I assure her, I am much interested in her welfare and peace of mind, and would think myself the happiest of my sex, could I be any way instrumental in promoting it; but all I can at

present offer as a consolence is, that the fleet will not be ready to leave England for more than a month to come. This piece of comfort I had from a captain in his majesty's service, whose ship is to make one of the squadron. During that interval, fortune, that fickle dame, may work much in your favour, as you know she is very wavering. Perhaps the regiment may be countermanded: it is not impossible. Live, my dear, on that hope, and let your Percy exist on your unalterable affections. For indeed, my dear Charlotte, notwithstanding the liberty I have taken, I believe you are sincerely attached to him, though not perhaps (nor is it prudent you should be) quite so much in love as himself. That you are bound to him by every tie of honour, is my real opinion, and that you ought never

to consent to be another's, is as true,
as that

I am,

Your affectionate,

JULIA AMBRIDGE.

When you write to lady Bettsworth,
do me the favour to inclose my sincere
affections.

LETTER XXVIII.

Miss GRENVILLE, to Miss AMBRIDGE.

Haywood Green.

MY DEAR MISS AMBRIDGE,

I Am now at my aunt's. A number
of events had taken place since I
had the pleasure of receiving your

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favour,

favour, and is the only apology I can make for not answering it before. In short, my mind is even at this moment in so unsettled a way, that I can hardly form myself to any one thing, much less to the describing my situation. What think you of my consenting to be united for life to ——— how shall I speak it ——— my aunt's favourite?

Now, my dear, are you not just on the verge of withdrawing your friendship from Charlotte Grenville, and pronouncing her the most fickle and inconstant of her sex? But do not be too hasty in that declaration; let it be repelled by my acquainting you, that this same favourite of her's has long been one with me, and that his name is Percy. He stole my aunt's approbation, and slid himself into her favour,

favour, through the channel of some money lately left him by a friend. The sum, I think, is two thousand pounds, with an appendage sufficient to purchase a company. The latter is lodged in an agent's hands for that purpose. He has a chance of soon purchasing from a captain whose regiment is now quartered in Edinburgh, and it is thought this event will take place in a few days. My gentle damon, must then immediately proceed for Scotland. My aunt and himself, have mortified me not a little by insisting on my promising to love, honour, and obey, before he goes. I wanted to play about the flame a little, but they will not indulge me.

So, my dear, you are of your brother's opinion, that a great deal of tranquil heart? Well, compliment to my understanding,

standing, if none to my susceptibility; and I will not be angry at your treating my passion with so much freedom, since I do not at present stand in need of much consoling, though it will ever be my ambition to merit your approbation. A visit at this time from yourself and brother, to confirm me in the opinion that I have still a place in your heart will make exceedingly happy

Your affectionate,

CHARLOTTE GRENVILLE.

P. S. Mr. Percy is now writing to Mr. Ambridge. He and my aunt desire me not to omit presenting their best respects. This morning the latter compleated my happiness by a present of two thousand pounds, and promises
if

if I am a good girl, a dutiful wife, and the Lord knows what (for a long sermon it was) that she will do a great many kind things for me besides. Positively I love her dearly—now my heart is at ease.

It is a general rule, to ask but one favour at a time: now contrary to this mode, I am going to request two.—The first, that I may have the pleasure of seeing you before Saturday the 14th expires; the second, that your brother will accompany you.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXIX.

EDW. AMBRIDGE, *Esq;* to Miss AMBRIDGE.

Grosvenor Square.

London.

MY DEAR JULIA,

A Very disagreeable cold, attended with a severe head-ach and troublesome cough, have in defiance of lenitives, insisted on being my companion for some days past, and prevented my sooner answering your affectionate letter. I applied your generous sentiments, and agree with you, that money can never be better layed out, than in procuring rational pleasure for ourselves, and in bestowing happiness on

on others. I assure you, my dear sister, I felt the latter in a very eminent degree, the having it in my power to compleat my friend Percy's wishes, and that, without (for I know his delicacy would have declined it) his knowing me the instrument, has made me exceedingly happy. As you would not allow me the supreme satisfaction of being the sole cause of his felicity, I added to the one thousand pounds you ordered, another from myself, and lodged a sufficiency in the agent's hands to purchase a company for Mr. Percy. The two thousands I lodged at an eminent banker's, not at my own, as I did not wish to appear in it, lest my friend should have had some reason to suspect me, as then my pleasure would have been not half compleat. I got an elderly gentleman of my
ac-

acquaintance to officiate for me, and give the proper orders for Percy's receiving it, and this day I received a letter from the latter, acquainting me with his good fortune. He supposes it proceeds from, and was prompted by the affection of his mother's brother, a gentleman who had often extricated his father from those difficulties which extravagance too frequently plunged him into. The money being lodged by an elderly gentleman, confirms him in this opinion. He says his uncle, for some years before his parents death, had declined all correspondence with them, as he found his fortune much decreasing, and that he was doing injustice to his own children.

My affections await my uncle. Expect to see me on Saturday, and have ready your bride-maid trappings. I have

have promised Mr. Percy and your friend miss Grenville, that we will be a witness of their happy union. I have answered for my uncle's approbation, and am your

Affectionate brother,

EDWARD AMBRIDGE.

L E T T E R X X X .

Lady BETTESWORTH, to Miss AMBRIDGE.

Thursday, Temple Grove.

THE many cruel severities which, my dear Julia, have poured themselves in torrents upon me, and which are determined to break the heart

heart of your friend, I hope will plead for an omission, which no other cause could have been productive of, a silence of more than six years past. Believe me, my dear, I am marked out by fate to be the prey of every woe.

I had no sooner seized on that soothing anchor of the mind, you so philosophically recommend in your last favour, and was anticipating years of bliss, when the buoy forsook its hold, and the new-erected mansion withdrew its protection, and sunk to the ground, with rebounding destruction from every quarter, upon my poor wretched head. I have often, during those racking trials, attempted to hush some part of my anguish in your faithful bosom by a communication, but found myself too weak to arrive at that avenue where my cares might for a moment have pause,
by

by a division. However discouraged, and depressed as I am, yet I will once more aim at the effort, and begin with reminding you that my last was dated from the South of France, the inhabitants of which shewed us every civility, and we passed our time in calm serenity, and mutual uninterrupted love, for near ten months; during which time, heaven blessed me with a lovely boy, the miniature of my dear, my loved, my much lamented husband. Alas! Julia, are not those tender epithets, now that the dear object is lost to me for ever, enough to awaken all my sorrow, and turn my brain to madness? Yes, the source of those dear names is flown for ever, and with him gone more than the life of your Cassandra! distraction and wild despair must surely be the consequence of reflection. But why
this

this frantic rage? Can it recall him, can it restore him to me? No! be still then my heart. O that the fluttering pulse would stop for ever, and death, that welcome friend to wretchedness, clasp me in his icy arms.

Excuse me, Julia, it is a grief, which all my struggles cannot suppress, yet I will endeavour to proceed in the heart-rending theme, by informing you I had hardly recovered, when our excursion was interrupted by a command my husband received from the secretary at war, immediately to join his regiment, which was then in Ireland, and in which he had purchased a majority. We immediately embarked for Bettsworth Mount, and there my beloved Hastings took leave of me, promising to return again as soon as possible. He had hardly left me eight weeks,

weeks, when one morning, from my dressing-room window, I saw on a sudden, a carriage with my husband's arms and livery driving full speed up the avenue. My heart leaped, triumphant joy smiled in my face, as I thought it was my dear Hastings, who had returned from Ireland. Eager impatience and love were conducting me to meet him, when a servant acquainted me it was a lady who had alighted and requested an interview. I had no sooner entered the drawing room, than I saw a beautiful woman drowned in tears. On my approaching her she made several efforts to speak, but for some time was incapable. When she did articulate, it was to inform me, I had no right to the affections of major Hastings, for that he was her husband; that they had parted by mutual agreement,

ment, but the thought of his preferring another, was insupportable to her.

My fright and astonishment were beyond expression, and my feelings can be conceived by none but a similar sufferer, if any such there is on earth. At first, all power of utterance was taken from me, and looks alone could describe the horrors of my mind! When I had gained strength enough to speak, I asked her, in a tremulous voice, how long they had been married? she told me five years, a portion of time which exactly corresponded with what I had seen in the papers, and convinced me I had been cruelly deceived. I knew not how to renounce one so dear to me. But then, was he not anothers? and did not rectitude demand I should forget him? Thus did love and honour contend in my distracted

tracted breast, and render me incapable for a while, to form any resolution. I saw what was right, yet I was irresolute. At last, after many conflicts, which cannot be described, I assured her, major Hastings should be mine no more; that I should think myself highly criminal, could I esteem him in any other light than as her husband, but I could not join with her in wishing him any other punishment than what his conscience, that faithful prober of the heart, would inflict. She talked very sensibly on the occasion, but with rather too much heat; declared she despised his principles so much that worlds should not prevail on her to live with him again; but then she would never see him made happy in the arms of another, and repeated so many base actions which she said he had been

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guilty of, that I shuddered at the recital, and could not refrain from falling on my knees in a kind of frenzy, solemnly vowing, from that moment, to shun as much as possible the sight of men, and to look on all the sex for the future as so many monsters of the creation, and unworthy of any esteem. Is it possible, I added, I should credit any one of them, after being so cruelly deceived by my Hastings? no, if *he* is not faultless, whose soul I thought was made up of every virtue, who is so? from this moment I will renounce them all.

Mr. Hastings expressed much concern for the anxiety which, she said, justice to herself had obliged her to occasion me, and then departed, with a pleasure and composure which was astonishing after the violent agitation she had,

had, a few moments before, appeared to be in ; but I imputed it to her having gained her point, and to the avowed contempt she felt for major Hastings.

There is no disappointment so shocking as that of being deceived by those whom habit and affection have taught us to confide in. I was truly miserable. Lady Anna Maria, with all her winning softness, strove to sooth and lighten my cares. In her tender bosom I poured out my complaints, and by her friendly council, was enabled to assume that fortitude and philosophy which was necessary to defend me from despair, on so trying an occasion as that of bidding adieu, for ever, to a man whom I had doated on, and from whose behaviour I had every reason on earth to suppose I was equally dear to. A thousand struggles rent my heart,

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before

before I could give way to reason, which told me the impropriety there would be in my ever seeing him more, and how very necessary it was for me to hide myself in some corner of the globe, where my story would never be repeated. By thus secreting myself, I hoped he would in time forget me, and repair the injury he had done Mrs. Hastings, in parting from her.

When I had a little recovered the shock this vicissitude had plunged me into, I wrote a very incoherent letter, upbraiding him with his perfidy, and begging, as a sort of reparation for the pain I had innocently given his wife, that he would endeavour to regain her affections. I told him I would not dwell on the cruelties he had been guilty of in depriving me of every blessing this world could afford; that,

un-

unfortunately for myself, I had formed my illusion of happiness on the stability of his affections, and left no resource in my breast to support me against the stroke he had so inhumanely inflicted. I concluded with assuring him, he had my forgiveness, as my dear Alphonso pleaded in my heart for his unkind father; but that all searches, should he make any after me, would be abortive, as I had secured a retreat which would, for ever, hide me from his sight, and I hoped prove a safe assylum, and prevent my hearing the cruel censure of the world, which no doubt would be very liberal in giving opinion on so extraordinary an affair as ours proved to be.

It then recurred to my mind; with redoubled poignancy, how much affliction my dear father's inflexibility had

occasioned me, how many heart-rending pangs I had experienced from my fatal marriage with Sir Martin, and could I have avoided taking that step, so repugnant to my wishes, for that was the chain that had joined me to woe, in all probability my life would have glided on in one peaceful round.

I had no sooner dispatched my letter, than a chilliness, resembling the approach of death, took possession of my frame, and my soul seemed rending asunder that clayey fortress that detained its flight.

Lady Anna Maria observed the commotion of my mind, and had hardly called my woman to her assistance, when every pulsation ceased, and I was supposed to be lifeless. I was conveyed to my chamber, and it was long before I had any signs of vital heat; but when
that

that friend to supporting nature returned, it was with burning impetuosity. A fever, attended with want of reason, accompanied me for nine days. During this disorder, I had short intervals of recollection, and in one of them I pronounced, yes, my dear Hastings may have been separated from her by the laws of justice. That thought shall support me till he can vindicate himself, and make me happy the next moment. I lost this soother to my affliction; but lady Anna Maria acquired some flattering views from it; and when I was a little composed, requested me to write again; that it was possible major Hastings might have been divorced by the laws of his country, and that Mrs. Hastings's visit might have taken its rise from a wish to destroy my peace. I immediately

grasped at the fond flattering idea, and wrote to my once dear husband, requesting him to pardon the frantic rage contained in my former letter, and entreating, if it was possible for him to say any one thing in defence of that cruel change, which had robbed me almost of life, that he would not delay to make me happy; that, in my frenzy, I had forgot to acquaint him with the source of it, and I related the interview I had with Mrs. Hastings. This done, I dispatched Edward with it to Ireland, a man servant whom my husband had great confidence in. I gave him orders to return as soon as possible, and in less than five weeks he appeared and delivered a letter to me, which he said, his master had many struggles to accomplish, as he was in the room while he wrote it.

Edw. H.

Had

Had Edward not prepared me with this prelude, I should certainly have suspected the hand; but as that was the case, and knowing the confidence his master reposed in him, and the fidelity with which he had ever conducted himself, I was prepared for the worst, and read with horror the following words:

My unfortunate, my beloved Cassandra, the most tender of all passions has been the source of our every woe. Would to God I could cancel the charge laid to me by that unworthy woman! she is my wife by law, but not by inclination. You, you, only possess my heart, and her I substituted in hopes to have forgot one much dearer to me. Knowing you to be another's, I thought it the only method to annihilate my former flame; but

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the knowledge of your liberty bereft me of honour, reason, and integrity. Pardon and forgive the unhappy Hastings.

I will not, Julia, attempt to describe my feelings on perusing this epistle, but in consequence of it, after commissioning a proper person to take charge of the Mount, &c. I immediately quitted Kent, accompanied by lady Anna Maria Burton, and my lovely infant, attended by his nurse, venerable old William, my woman Lucy, and the coachman. Edward I discharged with the rest of the servants, lest his attachment to his master should tempt him to betray me. The seat of lady Anna Maria's father, the earl of D——, was the place fixed on for my temporary residence. It was situated in the south of Wales, where,

where, my dear Julia, I must stop till to-morrow, being at this time unable to proceed further.

Tuesday Morning.

Our family consisted of the earl, and lady D —, lady Anna Maria, myself, and dear Alphonse for some time; but soon was increased by the arrival of lord Southern, brother of lady Anna Maria, a very fine gentleman, who during his tour had acquired all the ease and politeness of foreign courts, and with these were happily blended that constitutional bravery and sincerity, so peculiar to the English nation, together with an elegant sweetness of temper rarely to be found. He strove by all the delicacy of soft attention, to dispel that dejection which was conspicuous in all my movements, and as military exploits, and the customs and manners of foreign nations

were ever pleasing to me, he often entertained us with their history, and from his descriptive manner in the recital, made them both delightful and instructive.

His good sense, and accomplishments, incessantly reminded me of my dear Hastings; and instead of diminishing, served only to keep alive my remembrance of what was so necessary for me to forget. In short, Julia, he was formed to gain any heart that had been free and disengaged; but mine was full of grief, nor did I once suppose he felt a tenderer sentiment in my favour than that of friendship. Being dead myself to every partiality of that sort, I thought it impossible I could inspire it in another, till lady Anna Maria, with a very grave face, told me, she was apprehensive her brother was a victim to love, and would become

become a martyr to an hopeless passion, if I still persisted in the resolution she had so often heard me avow. She intreated I would not kill her dear Charles, by a refusal, should he gain courage to make proposals to me, and in the most delicate manner strove to persuade me my connection with major Hastings ought not to be an objection. She well knew her brother had too much sense to let it be an obstacle, and that she hoped I would make their happiness compleat by listening favourably to him.

Judge, Julia, my embarrassment, when I tell you she had hardly finished her solicitation, when lord Southern sent to enquire after my health, and to request permission to pay his respects. He presently entered my apartment, when his sister made an excuse to
with-

withdraw. He took that opportunity of declaring the partiality he felt for me, and the pain which concealment had occasioned in him. The fear, he said, of forfeiting my esteem, by a declaration, had kept silent the avowal of a passion, which he now found impossible longer to repel; that his happiness or misery was to be decided by me; and should my determination prove unpropitious to his wishes, he meant immediately to leave Wales; and, that dear as he loved his parents and sister, their entreaties should not prevail on him to alter his resolution.

I sat silently stupified for some time, being lost in the idea of the new storm of affliction, which I plainly saw had collected itself, and was ready to burst over me. At last lord Southern awakened me by taking my hand,
pressing

pressing it with a kind of frantic rapture to his lips, and intreating I would bestow on him one flattering look to soften (as he called it) the despair that was racking his very soul, and which was too painful to be supported without the assistance of hope. At length I ventured to lift up my eyes, and instantly my heart flew from me: his whole looks and manners were quite irresistible; they reminded me of the dear object, who was once the source of all my happiness, and I was weak and wicked enough in that moment, to suppose my attachment to this young nobleman, would be sufficiently authorized by the injustice I had received from my husband: yet the impropriety there would have been in my forming another connection, while
major

major Hastings lived, determined me to reject the heart he offered.

Trembling with confusion, I acknowledged my obligation for the esteem he honoured me with, but assured him, I never could be his; the very great trials and disquietudes I had experienced in the marriage state, had determined me never more to alter my condition; and that if he wished to oblige me he would be ever silent on the subject.

During this speech, lord Southern sat pensively by me, and at the conclusion, seemed exceedingly unhappy. He presently left me, exclaiming, "Alas! lady Bettessworth, is that breast so compassionate to the distresses of every other, only barred against the peace of him who loves you with the utmost tenderness?"

He

He was no sooner gone than I was lost in perplexity. The reflection that I was the innocent cause of affliction to those very persons who were endeavouring to eradicate mine, was a dagger to my soul. How particularly unfortunate is my situation! was my whole cry.

Lady Anna Maria made her appearance, her lovely eyes glistening, I thought, with resentful sorrow. I am come, said she, to plead in behalf of an unhappy brother. I requested her to be silent, and informed her of my resolution of taking leave in a few days of a family whose very great civilities I was obliged to return with seeming ingratitude.

I dreaded the ceremony of dinner, expecting every eye to reproach me; I pleaded indisposition in hopes of being excused,

excused, but in vain. Faithful William, soon after, presented a letter to me. I opened it, and found it came from the unhappy youth whose sorrows I could not help partaking of, and wishing I could, with propriety, dissipate. To be a witness of the distress I was bringing on so worthy a family, without having it in my power to lessen it, was a situation I could not bear with any degree of fortitude.—His letter was as follows:

DEAR MADAM,

THE sincerity and strength of my affection, and the merit of the lovely object that inspired it, is the only plea I can make for the rashness of the morning, and the pain which, I too plainly

plainly perceived, I had occasioned. To see and converse with lady Bettsworth and not to love, would be impossible. Not even the fear of offending could repel the soft passion; and to what extremes that passion would have hurried me, I cannot answer, had not my sister acquainted me with the singularity of your situation. Let me intreat, that my dear Anna Maria may not, by the attempt she made to lessen her brother's pain, incur your ladyship's displeasure. She has, in some degree, restored me to reason, by persuading me lady Bettsworth's delicacy will be an insurmountable bar to her ever being another's, whilst major Hastings exists, a compliment he is undeserving of, though it is a delicacy I cannot condemn; more particularly, as it cannot
be

be an obstacle to my living in hope, if lady Bettsworth would permit me the honour to flatter myself, should time remove those scruples, that I could then, by my utmost sollicitudes to please, render myself agreeable to her. Let your compassion, dear madam, deliver me from doubt, that most exquisite pain of the human breast; give me but the smallest hope, and be assured, I will exist without complaint, and endeavour to conduct myself in such a manner as not to offend. To resign you entirely, is impossible: unless I give up life, or fly from a place which will ever remind me of the lovely author of my pain. Allow me the blessing to be again esteemed as your friend, to accompany you in your walks, to endeavour to amuse you as before, from those disagreeable thoughts
which

which sometimes will intrude: indulge me in these requests, and be assured I shall ever retain a grateful sense of the blessing bestowed on me, and wait with resignation for the arrival of that happy period, when I may, with propriety, dedicate all my attention in convincing the most amiable of her sex, with how much ardency and affection,

I am her

Unalterable

SOUTHERN.

When I went down to dinner, I was surprized at not finding the young lord there, as he never, since his arrival had been absent at those family meetings. I could not help enquiring for him, as the letter I had just received, persuaded
in

in my own mind, that I was not the obstacle to his appearance; but I was soon convinced I was mistaken, for lady Anna Maria assured me, that her brother was determined not to increase his pain by seeing me, unless my answer was favourable to his intreaties. She farther added, that major Hastings had, by his infidelity, forfeited every claim to my affections, and of course I was at liberty to make her brother happy; that it was her opinion, where circumstances did not make love a crime, the confessing it could be none. The earl and lady D—— echoed their daughter in this sentiment, and pleaded in behalf of their son's passion, requesting I would restore tranquility to their family, by answering his letter.

The ruling passion of my heart, a feeling for the distress of others, that moment

moment threw a veil over my prudence. I thought affectation would but have injured that sincerity which had ever guided my actions; they brought me the implements for writing. I took the pen, and without farther reflection, assured the young lord, that to have it in my power, with propriety, to make him happy, would add to mine; and whenever it was, I would not hesitate a moment.—An absolute impulse, Julia, led me into this indecorum.—For any man, I added, that in the least resembled my dear Hastings, much as I then detested his sentiments, could not fail of inspiring me with esteem.

As soon as lady Anna Maria, had taken my billet to her brother, and I had time to reflect; I blushed at the confession I had made, and condemned myself for my imprudence. My face

was

was covered with a conscious glow of having been too precipitate in my answer; for although my sentiments were correspondent with lady Anna Maria's, in regard to the confessing love, where circumstances did not make it a crime, yet I judged a declaration of that sort, from one in my situation, highly improper, and I was severely repenting my imprudence; when, on a sudden, I saw lord Southern at my feet, his eyes and tongue thanking me for my letter. The sight of him embarrassed me still more; and for sometime after, when in his company, I felt a restraint which I could not shake off, and which, till then, I had never experienced: however, the daily encrease of my esteem for him, and resentment to my Hastings, got the better in some measure of my reserve: and though

we did not, in words, express our sentiments to each other on the subject, yet our actions proved our partiality; and at length I began to think myself justifiable in endeavouring to banish the idea of major Hastings, and to think him unworthy of my future love and regard.

William, who, till this time, had ever looked on Hymen as the cementer of wretchedness, and on Cupid as the father of dissimulation, took it into his head to alter his opinion, and to make his fellow-servant an offer of his heart. Lucy was not cruel, and in consequence of this revolution, they resigned their liberty at the shrine of Hymen. To crown, as much as was in my power their happiness, and to reward his long and faithful service, I purchased a small farm house, and

settled on the bride, fifty pounds a year. Their every wish seemed now compleat; the mutual affection they felt for each other, was heightened by their easy situation, which softened every care. In this peaceful round did their lives glide on for some months, when Lucy's tender feelings were transferred to a neighbouring 'squire; and William began to see, with the keen eyes of jealousy, the decrease of that sollicitude to please, which ever before had accompanied his wife's actions. His nights became lonely and forlorn, they parted bed, and every day multiplied his distresses: he planted suspicion as a spy over her, and discovered the intrigues she carried on; that she was robbing him of every thing in her power, and meant to accompany the young 'squire, who was going abroad.

Ex-

Exasperated at this intelligence, one day, when she was from home, William took the opportunity of breaking open a small trunk, which contained her papers, and in it he found many letters, which confirmed the opinion he had entertained of her wickedness; but what astonished him most was, a number of letters from Mr. Norton, which proved my husband's innocence. Lucy and he, it appeared, had kept a constant correspondence before and since my arrival in England, and they had both been instrumental in forming and putting that plot into execution, which had rendered me unworthy the affections of my dear husband, and put an end to all my prospects of future happiness. We likewise learnt, that Mr. Norton's silence when in the chaise, at the time he deprived me of liberty,

had proceeded from his irresolution in regard to the plan he was to adopt.

The conviction of my husband's innocence, stabbed me with severer pangs, if possible, than those I had felt on the supposition of his being guilty. Happy, Julia, would it have been for me, had I made Aristotle's observation a standard for my conduct, that, "incredulity is the source of wisdom." What a deluge of grief should I have escaped, had I followed the rule of the philosopher!

My cruel letter upbraided me in the severest terms, and will for ever do so. Why was I hurried on to throw away every blessing? Why did I not wait my dear Hastings's return, to know if he could have pleaded any thing in behalf of himself? Then to deprive him of his child, the smiling innocence that he had so often pressed in
his

his fond arms, and doated on with so much paternal affection! Alas, my friend, distraction I fear is still my portion! All those thoughts aggravated my crime: I was, and am now, on the point of despair, the wildest winds and seas, contending with each other, would be a calm if compared to the conflict then raging in my bosom. Every recollection of his former tenderness rushed upon me, every idea was pointed with daggers sharpened by the keenest remorse, and every thought of past pleasure pained me to the heart. Oh! Julia, pity your unfortunate friend! What a strange peculiar misery was mine! Reduced to a state of self-abhorrence, and, as an excuse for my rashness, to wish the man I love had been perfidious!

We farther learned by those cruel, those wicked letters, that the lady who

had waited on me, and called herself Mrs. Hastings, was a person whose character and principles were bad beyond description, and that she had been sent to destroy my peace.

In one of them, Mr. Norton said, when every scene of woe was complete, and my affections were alienated from my husband, which he looked on as a sure consequence of his scheme, he intended to renew his addresses to me, and made no doubt of proving successful; that he loved me to a degree of distraction, and was determined, let the consequence be what it would, that I should be his; and when he parted with that hope, he would part with life itself. He desired her to be punctual in sending him intelligence of all my actions, and in a ludicrous way, enjoined her to suppress conscience, and
never

never more mention that bugbear monitor ; that she might depend on having what he promised settled on her, the moment I was in his power, which he hoped would be soon, as he meant to quit France in a few weeks.

By another letter I found, that Edward, whom I had thought so faithful, had never delivered my letter to major Hastings, and that the one he brought me had been forged ; that Lucy and he had intercepted two letters my husband had sent me, complaining of my silence, and that the day of my departure from Kent, Edward had set off with my first distracted epistle, but had suppressed the latter, and informed his master, that the upbraiding letter I then sent him, was a piece of artifice and cunning in me, and was designed as an apology for my never seeing him more.

This fresh proof of treachery reminded me of my mother's cruelties, and made me for a while, uncharitable to all the world: I could hardly believe any face I saw was not forming some scheme to give a fresh wound to my poor tortured breast.

How little, Julia, do we know ourselves! I had believed no event could have encreased the afflictions I suffered at having discovered, as I thought, the infidelity of my dear Hastings; but the reflection, that he was an equal sufferer with me, joined to the opinion he must have formed of my sentiments and honour, was a trial too severe for all my fortitude. I raved with despair, every friendly soothing faculty forsook me, not one kind tear would afford its aid, that consoler of sorrow was exhausted quite, and every tender avenue to my heart

heart was frozen up by horror. Frantic I was put to bed, and continued in that state for near two months, during which time my life was despaired of, as a violent fever accompanied the frenzy, which I was agitated with.

As soon as I grew more calm, and could compose myself enough to reflect with any degree of sensibility, I sent for lord Southern, who had kindly pressed me to let him go in search of my dear husband. When he entered my room, I presented a letter to him, directed for major Hastings. My tongue was mute with grief, my sighs and tears were all that could speak what I wished to request. He understood their language, and immediately left me, to give orders for his journey.

Next morning he set out, attended by faithful William, &c. for London,

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where

where we had heard major Hastings had been not long before.

The wretch that had so wickedly destroyed my peace, fled the moment she was apprized of her husband's opening her trunk, and all search after her proved insufficient.

My lord's first letter, after his arrival in England, informed me, all he could at that time learn of major Hastings, was, that he had applied, and obtained leave, to serve in the Russian service, and that he had sailed for some weeks before, in order to join the army. Lord Southern, further added, he would send my letter inclosed to a friend of his, in Russia, whom he could depend on, and who would forward it to any part of the kingdom.

I was anxious to know if my husband
had

had been at my seat in Kent, since my fatal departure from thence. To be informed of that circumstance, I wrote to miss Furnel, a young lady I had been intimate with when there, and did not doubt an invitation to make me a visit would be gladly received by her, and my expectations were soon confirmed, by my having the pleasure of seeing a friend whom I sincerely loved. She was accompanied by a miss Jones, a relation of her's, a young lady, who had not been long arrived from America.

It was a fresh wound to my peace, when I heard my husband had not, in person, made any enquiry for me, but that he had wrote to a friend for that purpose; a friend who could not (as I had kept my removal a secret till accomplished) give him any further in-

formation, than that I had left the Mount. This circumstance must have strengthened the barbarous accounts he had heard of me, and my cruel letter have confirmed it. How insupportable the thought !

Miss Jones, with the rest of my friends, endeavoured by their most endearing persuasions, to alleviate my anxiety, but she was ill calculated to remove those troubles from others which she seemed equally to feel. There was a peculiar sweetness in her whole deportment, and a languor which seemed to bespeak disappointed love. This assimilation of dejection made her pleasing to me. I had often, during her visit, observed tears of soft sorrow, quivering in her eyes, which I then could not account for. One morning passing her room, my attention was caught by hearing her
in

in a loud, but plaintive voice, repeating the following lines out of the tragedy of Tamerlane :

“ Oh ! Death ! thou gentle aid of human sorrows,

“ Still must my weary eye-lids vainly wake,

“ In tedious expectation of thy peace ?”

A secret impulse carried me into her apartment, before I could reflect on the intrusion, and perhaps, impropriety of my visit. I found the disconsolate girl walking with slow, but solemn motion round the room ; her deportment announcing desponding reason, or despairing love. A letter was in her hand, which was almost effaced by the briny torrent of affliction, which had overspread her lovely face. I clasped her with fond compassion to my breast, and im-

importuned her, by a thousand assurances of my love and friendship, to let me bear a part in her sufferings.

After many struggles to speak, she exclaimed, excuse my weakness, lady Bettesworth; I was early acquainted with disappointments, and can keep pace with you, in all your woes. The sorrows I have experienced can be equalled by none but those you feel, and the affliction which impressed itself on my early heart will accompany me to the grave, that desirable mansion, where love is forgot, and calamities are hushed to peace. The letter you see here was written long since, and the dear author of it snatched from me, with all my happiness.

Here grief interrupted her, but she promised, when more composed, to give me a recital of her misfortunes.

Lady

Lady Anna Maria, and miss Furnel, being abroad the next evening, and lady D—— gone to visit a sick neighbour, I took the opportunity of repeating my request, and she, with obliging sweetness, addressed me as follows :

“ I will endeavour, madam, to obey you, and the more readily, as the part which I flatter myself your compassionate breast will take in the affliction of your friend, may, for a moment, make you forget your own, and convince you, you are not the only one marked out by fate for severe trials.

“ My father was a gentleman by birth, and heir to a large estate in Staffordshire; my mother's father was a capital merchant in the city of London, a bad husband, and indifferent parent. When my mother was about six years old, her father failed in business, which obliged him

him immediately to abscond. My grandmother was unacquainted to what part of the world he had taken refuge in, and but little solicitous to know, as love had not cemented their chains. Several years passed, and no intelligence of him. What we wish we easily believe: she concluded him dead, and then married a Mr. Cawley, a gentleman of fortune. My mother being at that period very young, she was taught as much as possible to forget a father, who was unworthy that appellation; and, when she grew up, was known by no other name than that of her step-father. They moved to Stafford, where my dear father married miss Cawley. My mother had a pretty face, but that, and her being a virtuous woman, were her only charms. She was proud to a degree, extravagant, and very weak in
her

her understanding; yet my father never abated in his affections for her, though I have often seen his embarrassment, when she has given striking proofs of her inability.

“They lived in the greatest splendor and affluence for some years after their marriage, when unfortunately my mother’s step-father, Mr. Cawley, whose passion was for erecting magnificent edifices, thought a new feat, directed by his own plan, necessary to his felicity. He had not long before met with many very great losses by sea, having several vessels on that uncertain element; yet they did not frighten him from his purpose. The scheme was no sooner formed, than he engaged proper artificers for compleating this fabric of his brain. He watched, with a heart beating with pleasure, the growing building, and
saw

saw it rise almost to the summit of his utmost wishes, when his expectations were in a moment sunk to the ground.

“ During this paroxysm of pride and folly which had invaded him, he forgot money would be a requisite for indulging his fancy, and when his workmen waited to be paid, he was unprovided with the means of satisfying them. A writ was immediately the consequence, and my father to extricate him, gave security for the payment at the expiration of three months; a time the creditors had given Mr. Cawley to accommodate his affairs in: but unfortunately, during that interval Mr. Cawley was seized with the small pox, and died.

“ By this blow, my dearest father, was obliged to pay the sum he had been security for; and being unable any longer to support the figure in life he had been

been accustomed to make, he parted with his carriage, discharged his servants, sold what little effects he then had remaining, and embarked for America, with his family, which consisted of my mother, and two children, my brother James, and sister Fanny, one man, and a maid servant. As to my miserable self, I was not in being for more than two years after my parents crossed the Atlantic. My father there got some little employment under the government, and was universally beloved and pitied: my mother was despised for her folly, and the remaining taste she had for extravagance. We were invited to all public entertainments; and on those occasions, received the civilities that were certainly due to my father's birth and education. We had but few visitors at our house, as
my

my mother was of too simple a turn to be entertaining, and my father's finances too low to enable him to support the expence which much company occasions.

“As my mother never looked beyond the present hour, and one of her prevailing foibles being that of wishing for change; she persuaded my father to move to Quebec, and he got a gentleman who had influence to procure him a small pittance there. She took my sister Fanny from school, who was then at Mount Belvidere.”

The name of Mount-Belvidere, you may be sure, Julia, could not pass unnoticed: I was on tortures to ask a thousand questions, being persuaded from the name and description, that I had known some of her family. I suppressed, however, my curiosity at that time,

time, as I must my pen at present, and assure you (after telling you that next post I shall satisfy the curiosity which I suppose I have inspired in you) that I am with sincerest affection to yourself, and esteem to your uncle and brothers,

Your most attached, tho'

Unhappy friend,

CASSANDRA BETTESWORTH.

From the Same to the Same.

Wednesday Morning.

MY DEAR JULIA,

I Suppressed, as I said in my last, my curiosity at that time; and miss Jones proceeded.

" My

“ My sister Fanny was not handsome when a child, but ripened into beauty; and that delicacy of sentiment which was peculiarly characteristic in my father, shone with unrivalled blaze in her mind. Her temper was amiable, her form faultless, and voice harmonious. She was blest with a great share of sense; her only foible was precipitation; and to be agreeable was her easiest task.

“ At the age of nineteen, an elderly lady and gentleman, who had been twenty years married, all of which time they had been intimate in our family, grew fond of her company, and she was often at their house. The old lady died, and Mr. Derby (for that was the elderly gentleman's name) made love to my sister. The match was thought advantageous, and their nuptials were celebrated with joy; for though Mr. Derby had

had no real estate, he enjoyed employments under the government, which amounted to five hundred a year.

“ Soon after their marriage, Mr. Derby found it necessary to visit his friends in England, and were to return to us the next spring. Fanny entreated much to accompany him. He strove, by the most tender remonstrances, to point out the distresses and fears so long a voyage might expose her to, but she was inflexible. They accordingly embarked, and took leave, assuring us they should facilitate their return with the utmost promptitude.

“ At the time of their departure, my sister was young with child. On their passage, they were taken by the enemy, and conducted to a Spanish prison, where she struggled with the severest hardships, being obliged to lye
on

on the cold floor of the jail without a bed, and hardly the common necessaries of life.

“ During this time, Mr. Derby was taken exceedingly ill, the week they were to have been exchanged for other prisoners. His disorder encreased, and was pronounced by the physicians to be a malignant jail distemper, which was then raging amongst many miserable wretches who were confined in the prison. The officers appointed to inspect, would not suffer Mr. Derby to go on board the ship, till he was perfectly recovered, for fear of spreading the contagion; and a few days after, his sorrows and life terminated together.

“ Distracted with grief, my sister embarked for England, and during the

the passage she was delivered of a lovely daughter. Quick as possible, after her arrival in Europe, she again embarked for America, it not being convenient for her long to continue in that part of the world, as Mr. Derby's income ceased the moment his breath expired. My father was exceedingly shocked at her distresses, and the debts she had been obliged to contract, as he was little able to discharge them; yet he applauded the step she had taken, as it evinced the propriety of her conduct, and thought no struggles too great to lessen her anxieties, and prove his paternal affection.

“ My sister's mind was too keenly hurt by the misfortunes she had been plunged into by the death of her husband, soon to be composed, and my mother's deficiency, in point of ma-

ternal tenderness, was severely felt by her. For though my mother's understanding was weak, it was no proof of a feminine heart. Fanny never engaged a great share of her affections, and now she esteemed her in no other light than that of an interloper, and was often reminding my dear sister of her unhappy situation. Fanny was, as I said before, in all her actions, rather too hasty. At that time we had observed her reason to be weakened by her affliction, and that frenzy had seated itself on the throne of that directing monitor. In a fit of despondency—O! lady Bettsworth, how shall I close the dreadful scene?—Can you conceive it?—Speak it for me. Alas! behold my dear sister, deprived of life by her own hands, and the lovely prattler sharing her unhappy fate!

This

“ This shocking scene was too much to be supported by my father : he lived but three days after her, and this dreadful event deprived me of every blessing of life. I was left helpless and forlorn.

My mother and self retired to a small house we had in the country. My brother was a midshipman on board a man of war, which was then at New York.

“ One evening, my mother and I being at the window, we saw an elderly man, who, from his appearance, we supposed a beggar. She was seized with an impulse of pity, and though but little to give, ordered some cold meat to be carried to him, when, to her great surprize, she was informed her father wanted to see her. She recollected his person, and pride, shame

and resentment, lighted a torch in her face. The old man mortified her still more, by saying he had seen her son, meaning my brother at York, and that he could not be happy till he had found her out. She told him, he might have saved himself the trouble, and lived as he always had done, without that fruitless pleasure. Here she paused, but soon added, he might sleep there that night, but next day, she supposed, he would think it necessary to depart, as her little income would hardly support her own family.

“I was exceedingly shocked at the treatment my mother gave him, and took the first opportunity, when we were alone, of striving to soften her rigour, but without effect. I endeavoured, as much as in my power, by every little attention to his wants, to palliate her cruelty, for
though

though ever so unworthy, was he not her father? I had a bed made ready and aired, and some wine whey carried up after he was in bed. He seemed pleased with those little proofs of my tenderness, but much shagrin'd at his daughter's want of filial affection. He asked me many questions relative to my grandmother, and said he had wrote often to her, but supposed she had not received his letters. The next morning he was taken extremely ill, and in a few days expired, leaving me, to my great surprize, fifteen thousand pounds, which he had realized in some of the West-India islands. He appeared in that garb, to prove the reception his daughter would give him under the appearance of distress. It is my real opinion, she hastened his death by her unkindness, as she never went near him

during the time of his illness, and her excuse for this barbarity was, did she give him encouragement, he would never leave her house.

“ We immediately removed to the town of M——, where I met with a young gentleman, a lieutenant in the army. He had paid his address to me before my father’s decease, and at that time was on an expedition. I had been so shocked at the change I had experienced in the course of a few months, that I, for awhile, had dropped corresponding with him, as I could not think of giving him my hand, till he was better provided for; and being convinced from the generosity of his nature, and extreme love for me, that he would, when he found me distressed, however inconvenient to himself, solicit my mother for her approbation to
our

our being united; but my grandfather's legacy having removed every obstacle of that kind, I wrote to him, but made no mention of my good fortune. He met me at M——, as I expected, and at the end of two months we were to be married.

“ I entreated my mother's permission to go to W—— on a visit to my uncle, whom I had not seen for some years. She consented, and I was received by him with all the affection of a parent. My lover had an invitation to pass some weeks with us.

“ I had been blessed with my dear Nevil's company but a few days, when we were alarmed in the night with the cry of fire. It began in a room under where my dear Nevil slept. In vain we strove to alarm or save him; the flames were too rapid to be repelled,

and he and his servant, who slept in a closet adjoining to his department, were consumed to ashes."

At the conclusion of this last dreadful sentence, Julia, she sunk half expiring on the settee, where she was sitting. I partook of all her sorrows, and was rendered almost incapable of affording her the smallest assistance.

On her recovery, she said, my dear lady Bettsworth, you will judge from your own sufferings what I must have felt on so trying an occasion, as that of resigning to death an object so dear to me; but can form no idea, how much it was aggravated by the shocking calamity, which deprived me of him. You can now, no longer, be surprized at the melancholy, which has taken possession of your friend. The silent tomb is the mansion for rest, there I wish

to

to lay me down in everlasting oblivion.

O Julia! how did my heart upbraid me, at that moment, for giving the unhappy mourner so much pain! I condemned my curiosity, and strove to suppress the remaining recital of her unhappy theme, but to no effect, she seemed determined to indulge the pleasure of grief, and proceeded thus by my intreaty.

“My mother returned to England, the fortune my grandfather had left me, being sufficient to support us both. We purchased a small seat called Bartley Hall, situated in a pleasing neighbourhood, about fifty miles from Furnel forrest, and when my aunt Furnel heard of our arrival, we received an invitation to pass a few weeks with herself and my amiable cousin. At

first I declined it, as society could afford me no pleasure, my heart being dead to every thing but grief. However, her repeated solicitations made it absolutely incumbent on us to accept her invitation. Happy for me I did, as time has convinced me, had I been permitted to indulge my dejection, despair must have ensued, and perhaps, shocking thought ! have plunged me into a rashness similar to that which overwhelmed my dear sister. A decline, which the physicians say I am going into, requires change of air. Miss Furnel was going to make your ladyship a visit, and insisted on my accompanying her. I at first objected to it, being apprehensive it would expose me to more company than I could wish, and being conscious it was not in my power to afford pleasure to others."

Here,

Here, Julia, the appearance of the ladies put an end to our conversation, what an unfortunate fate was Fanny's!— I suppose, my dear, you will recollect as well as myself, that she was the miss Jones, at Mount Belvidere, whom, we out of ridicule, used to call *finene*, on account of her mother's gaudy choice of her ornaments.

I went to bed, but sleep was vanished in the idea I had of her superior sufferings. I thought my own light, when compared to what my dear miss Jones had felt, and for some time, they dwindled into a mere nothing, by the happy hope I then had, of being once more restored to my dear Hastings.

Miss Jones stayed several months with us, and I had the pleasure of seeing her more chearful, though very evidently in a decline. Her mother being

indisposed, obliged us to part, though with reluctance: we were sisters in affliction, therefore calculated to console with each other.

Several months passed, and no news from my husband, time grew insupportable, my nights were disturbed by frightful dreams, my dear Hastings appearing to me in the most horrid forms, and upbraiding me for my conduct.

I spent most of my time in the wilderness, as best suited to my turn of mind, and for gratifying the melancholy desire I had to wrap myself in gloom and solitude.

One fine evening, the earl and lady Anna Maria, being from home, and lady D—— gone to bed much indisposed with the head-ach, I thought it a good opportunity to indulge myself,
and

and set off for my favourite walk. It was about eight o'clock, and when I entered the garden, my attention was caught by the splendid light which seemed to reflect with unusual lustre from the moon and stars. I traversed for near two hours in contemplation, and when I entered the wilderness it was late. The shade, which was occasioned by the trees and shrubs, struck me with unusual tremor, and some lines, which I had been reading that morning, occurred to me, and strengthened my fears; however, I persevered till I reached the first seat, which was opposite the entrance, and repeated the lines I have mentioned with unusual energy.

" This

- “ This midnight deep to plaintive love accord,
“ This lonesome silence and these hideous shades,
“ That in this darksome hour I dare to tread,
“ And all the horrors of this fearful place,
“ Will suit a wretch abandon'd to despair !
“ But ah ! what means this sudden fear that creeps,
“ In chilling sweats o'er all my trembling limbs ?
“ What hollow whispering sounds are those I hear ?
_____ be still my fears,
“ 'Tis vain illusion all, and phantasy,
“ The fears which love-distemper'd brain suggests,
“ Alas, they will not bring me back my love !”

I repeated these lines so often, and with so forceable an utterance, that I almost
almost

almost fancied I did really hear some unusual sounds. I was afraid to stay, afraid to go, and had almost given myself up to despair, when on a sudden my attention, by a rustling noise, was called to the entrance of the desert, and I thought I saw my dearest Hastings pass it. That thought instantly told me, lord Southern had been successful, and that he was in pursuit of me. I lost my fears, and ran to meet, as I imagined, my dearest husband; but, alas! Julia, the pleasing vision vanished. I was much disconcerted at first, but on reflection, and not supposing major Hastings dead, I imputed it to the distraction of my brain, and looked on it in no other light than as the offspring of a disordered imagination.

The splendor of the moon again gave me courage, I was traversing with
speed

speed when my woman and footman overtook me. They were alarmed at my stay, and coming in pursuit of me. Having these people with me, I continued my walk till I was quite composed, and then retired to bed, with a tranquillity of mind which I had not experienced for some time, and which, but a few hours before, I thought gone for ever. My dreams were pleasing, I fancied myself in the wilderness, my husband advancing, smiling, and beckoning to me. On my waking, Romeo's soliloquy occurred to me.

“ If I may trust the flattery of sleep,

“ My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.

“ My bosom's Lord sits lightly on its throne.”

On

On my coming down, the first thing I saw on the breakfast table was a letter directed for me. Trembling, I took it up, and the perturbation which that instant seized me, was too sure a preface of the contents. It came from lord Southern: but, good heaven! what were my feelings on opening it, my dear Hastings was no more! He fell with many other brave officers in battle. My eyes were blinded, the springs of life seemed stopped, and my whole frame shook with horror.

I could read no farther, nor will I attempt to describe a situation which no language can, or any other affliction equal. My sorrows were unbounded, there were no limits to the distraction and despair that seized me, and in the anguish of my mind I exclaimed, ah! why, why am I thus marked by fate
only

only to be wretched? The recollection that my dearest husband was not undeceived in his last moments, and that he must have thought me guilty, was never to be forgotten. Yes, Julia, were I to live an age, it would be equally painful to me, as at this moment. Tho' I had ever found conscious innocence a support in the day of affliction, yet I despaired of its stability against so trying an occasion, and sunk into the greatest despondency.

Lord Southern wrote to my brother, who was then with his regiment at Dover, and related to him all my misfortunes. He was an entire stranger to them, as I would not let him be acquainted with my husband's supposed infidelity at that time, for fear of the consequence to both of them. Convinced of my brother's impetuous temper,

temper, I dreaded his knowing the injury done to his own, and sister's honour; for to make use of Mr. Addison's character of Marcus, "Fling but the appearance of dishonour on it, he straight takes fire, and mounts into a blaze."

My lord requested he would visit Wales as soon as possible, as he thought I could not have too many of my friends near me, to soften and mitigate my sorrows.

On the receipt of this letter, my dear Frank came with all possible expedition; stayed a week, and then pretended he had received orders to join his regiment. It was only a pretence, as his real motive was to go in search of the unworthy wretch who had embittered my future and past life. Had I known his intentions, it would, if possible,

possible, have added to my unhappiness; but the wise disposer of all events protected my dear brother, and would not permit such a sinner as Norton, longer to exist. Much as he had injured me, I shuddered at the recital, and am sorry he was overtaken by divine wrath, at a time, perhaps, when meditating new mischiefs, and unprepared for so awful a change.

He was on his passage from Montpelier, and proceeding to Wales in a small vessel, when a violent gale of wind arose, the vessel was blown upon some rocks, where it split to pieces, and (shocking to reflect on) not one soul escaped, excepting the master, who related the melancholy tale. By him, we learned, there was a woman on board, which we have reason to conclude was the wicked Lucy. Lady
Anna

Anna Maria wrote an account of the shipwreck to her brother, who was then in London. He and Frank immediately returned, when the alteration in lord Southern's appearance startled me. I was afraid to enquire the cause, but feared I was too well acquainted with it: he was consumed by an hopeless passion. I pitied him and do still, but that is all he ever must expect from your unhappy friend. However, the appearance of tranquility in some measure was once more restored to this amiable family. I had also the satisfaction of seeing a mutual affection take place, between my brother and lady Anna Maria; and soon after I had the additional satisfaction of beholding them united by the most solemn ties. It was an union I ardently wished for, as a sort of atonement for the affliction I had occasioned
in

in a family I so sincerely loved and esteemed. My dear Frank is of an amiable disposition, and I made no doubt of his making a good husband; and, since his marriage, he has justified my opinion.

On the death of Mrs. Jones, which happened about this time, her daughter removed to a genteel but retired seat (my present habitation) some miles nearer her aunt Furnel's. She solicited me to make one of her family, and I accepted the invitation the more readily, as the situation is calculated to indulge that gloom which is grown pleasing to me, and to nurse that sorrow, which will ever be an inhabitant of my breast. My brother and friends, as I absolutely declined forming any new connection, or longer staying in a family where I was only keeping alive their
their

their son's attachment and pain, strove to persuade me again to return to Bertesworth Mount; but those dear scenes of former love, I wish to forget; and, therefore, to be removed as far as possible, from a place once so dear to me, was absolutely necessary to the preserving that little fortitude I am mistress of, and which, perhaps, is the only expedient left me, to bear up against, and to encounter more trials, though most likely of an inferior nature; for you will allow, my Julia, none can exceed, if equal those I have already experienced. I mean, in this retreat, to shun all society but that of my dearest friends. Sorrow sinks deepest in the mind, when nursed in solitude: perhaps that may accelerate an end to all my disquietudes, by ending in death, and I should not care how soon that

that event took place, did not my affections for dear Alphonso call me back; for, indeed, my life is one scene of uninterrupted woe.

Miss Furnel accompanied us to miss Jones's seat, and after our arrival, her mother inclosed her a letter, she had received for her, from lady Hill, miss Furnel having commenced an acquaintance with her ladyship when at Bettsworth Mount. Lady Hill's letter ran thus :

MY DEAR MISS FURNEL,

SINCERELY do I feel for, and sympathize with my dear friend lady Bettsworth. I have heard but an imperfect account of the extraordinary events which have attended her since we parted, nor is it a subject for me to enter upon with herself; therefore, oblige me, miss
Furnel,

Furnel, and give me the particulars of of her affliction and situation. We often awaken those sorrows in the breast of our friends, which we wish to hush to peace, by untimely condolence. The proofs I have experienced of this truth have determined me not to write to her, till her mind is in a state more proper to receive consolation. How could my dear lady Bettsworth be so credulous? Her too easy belief, I fear, has destroyed her repose for ever. That detestable Norton! and those two female fiends! why did good heaven permit them to accomplish their wicked and cruel schemes? I will not give way to thought, lest I should grow presumptuous.

The more I reflect, the more I am amazed, at the precipitate step my friend was hurried into. How could

she so cruelly fly from her tender husband? Why did not the thousand proofs he had given her of his honour, love, and tenderness, plead for him, and at least, make her hesitate, for a few months, and deter her from so inconsiderate, so barbarous a flight? How often has she declared to me, that he was the magnet, that attracted her to every felicity! that nature never formed his equal! that every virtue inhabited in his bosom! that to see his face, was to see his soul, and that no guile could dwell in so good a mind! Thus has she sounded his worth a thousand, and a thousand times, and could she lose the idea of all those perfections in a moment? rash and inconsiderate woman!

You will say, my dear miss Furnel,

that

that I am severe on my friend. She does not hear me, nor do I mean she should see this letter; but were she by, I could not help owning, that though I loved and pitied her, I condemned her credulity, and that I could not find an excuse for her in my own heart, had I not had so many demonstrations of the goodness of hers. A too strict notion of honour, virtue, and generosity, often brings on us poor mortals the greatest misfortunes. Those too nice sentiments have, from her early days, been the source of much affliction to her; and now, why does rigid virtue forbid her accepting the generous hand of lord Southern? Is she not at liberty to make that young nobleman happy? Rally her, miss Furnel, banish, if possible, those enthusiastic sentiments which have so long destroyed

her peace. I am at a loss to find an excuse for her conduct in any shape, and should be equally so, to account for her fortitude in supporting so great a load, did I not know, that a conscious innocence of heart will support, and bear us up against the greatest misfortunes.

Let me hear from you soon, and believe me, with every wish for your mother's and your happiness, my dear miss Furnel,

Your most affectionate,

E. HILL.

This

This letter was delivered to miss Furnel, before me, and she, not suspecting there was any secret in it, opened it. She blushed as she read. I knowing it to be lady Hill's hand, insisted, as a compliment due to friendship, that she would read whatever related to myself, as I doubted not I was mentioned. The amiable girl declined it, till she saw me rise up rather displeased, and going to leave the room. She then presented the letter.

Oh! Julia, why would my friend awaken all my grief, and judge so unkindly of a conduct, which a sense of honour, and hard fate, compelled me to pursue! Had I loved less, a greater share of rectitude would have accompanied my actions. Weakness is generally an attendant on true affection.

How extremely humiliating and insupportable is chastisement from a friend ! Lady Hill's strictures on my conduct, hurt me exceedingly. What a new sting was it to my heart, the reminding me of that cruel elopement ! It entered my very soul. Her censure, in regard to my rigid virtue, as she terms it, in declining an alliance with lord Southern, had no effect on me ; as our education was different, so are our sentiments of rectitude. Lady Hill's has been liberal, mine confined. She was brought up in the gay world, I in the wilds of America, where it would be thought the greatest indecorum for a woman to form a new connection who was in my unhappy situation, and, Oh ! distraction ! who had killed the best of husbands ! For, was he not, Julia, murdered by my unkind treatment ?

ment? And could I act correspondent with lady Hill's sentiments, I should think it a new injustice to his dear shade, and of course must be lost to every sense of virtue, honour, and delicacy.

But I will no longer dwell on a subject I wish to forget, and which always brings a fresh wound with it, but acquaint you, that my sweet little boy is with me. He is my comfort—if I have any left. Yet his sensible innocent prattle often awakens my pain. To make you know his worth, I must make you acquainted with some of his judicious remarks.

I was yesterday in the alcove reading, when I heard him crying in the garden. I ran to enquire the cause, and was told he had lost his little butterfly. I endeavoured to console him by an
 affu-

assurance, that William should procure another. But that, mama, replied he, will not be the same: and could you, my dear mama, part with any thing you dearly loved, and not be sorry? I told him when the loss was irreparable, we should endeavour to get the better of it. Yes, mama, but that I cannot in a moment, I must forget it first. In short, Julia, I found the mother too weak to argue with the child, and vanquished returned to my former seat and book. Presently after, he came running to shew me another, a new little dear, as he called it, which had offered itself for his amusement. On entering the alcove, and observing I looked grave, do, mama, oblige me, and read what makes you sorry. I repeated the following lines, which I had just met with in the book:—

“Pensive

- “ Pensive I call to mind some former day,
“ The flow’ry paths in which we used to
 stray,
“ Each word that drop’d from that delightful
 tongue,
“ On which clear sense and mild persuasion
 hung,
“ The ev’ry act where dignity and ease,
“ Graceful conspired, and never fail’d to
 please;
“ The lov’d ideas all my griefs renew,
“ Ye charming scenes, ye dear delights
 adieu!

At the conclusion of those words, he hung upon me, kissed me many times, drowned my neck with tears, offered me his little fly, and sobbed as if his heart was breaking. My dear mama, cried he, was my papa indeed such a good fine gentleman?

I could not answer him, nor can I
add

add more at present, my dear Julia,
than to assure you of the sincere af-
fections of

Your

CASSANDRA BETTESWORTH.

P. S. Miss Jones requests, through
me, to obtain a corner in your heart.
She is truly worthy of it, and I have
taken the liberty of promising her a
part of your esteem. Mine will ever
attend your uncle and brother. To
see you is one of the first wishes of your
unhappy friend, and will give pleasure
to the amiable and deserving miss Jones.
I was so lost in my own sorrows that
I had forgot to mention those which my
friend Mrs. Cornwallis must have felt
on hearing of the death of her amiable
daughter,

daughter. Poor miss Cornwallis, notwithstanding the flattering hopes we entertained of her health being restored by change of air, she expired three days after my last letter to you, which was dated at Turenne.

Miss Harrington returned with us to Bettefworth Mount, stayed a week with me, and then set out for her father's seat in Scotland; since then she is married to major Furlong, a gentleman of a large estate in that country.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A

V O L. I.

Page

- 2, line 19, for *is*, read *was*.
 33, — 11, for *or two*, read *tune or two*.
 42, — 5, read *Through your letter I was*.
 — 9, dele *now*.
 50, — 20, for *coaling*, read *coving*.
 52, — 11, for *curiosity*, read *remark*.
 55, — 14, dele *period*, and put a *comma*.
 61, — 9, for *have*, read *benefit by*.
 66, — 14, for *an expression*, read *a proof*.
 133, — 13, for *flashing*, read *flourishing*.
 154, — 5, dele *semi colon*, and put a *comma*.
 156, — 10, for *cruel*, read *cruelly*.
 175, — 12, 13, for *proof my resentment of*, read *proof of my resentment for*.

V O L. II.

- 17, — 3, for *plays* read *play*.
 — 4, for *claims its*, read *claim their*.
 — 6, for *inhabitant*, read *inhabitants*.
 25, — 8, for *it*, read *them*.
 — 9, for *governs*, read *govern*.
 — 11, for *its*, read *their*.
 — 12, for *It*, read *These*.
 53, — 7, for *passion*, read *passions*.
 57, — 11, dele *on*.
 63, — 8, for *course*, read *source*.
 71, — 5, for *it*, read *they*.
 81, — 9, dele *one of*.
 89, — 6, dele *colon*, and put a *comma*.
 96, — 21, dele *comma*, and put a *period*.
 110, — 12, for *the cause*, read *is the cause*.
 129, — 14, for *Afraca*, read *Africa*.
 137, — 3, dele *comma*, and put a *period*.
 146, — 16, for *Mr.* read *Mrs.*
 149, — 19, dele *semi-colon*, and put a *comma*.
 155, — 7, for *Alphonse*, read *Alphonso*.
 165, — 21, after *persuaded*, add *me*.



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